Fr. Wrangham 1813.

AN

ESSAY

Concerning the

Nature and Guilt

OF

LYING.

BY

CHARLES BRENT, M. A.
Rector of *Christ-Church* and St. *Werburge* in *Bristol*.

Οὐ βελόμεθα ζῆν ψευδολογοῦντες.
Just. Mart. Ap.

Wherefore putting away Lying, speak every Man Truth with his Neighbour. Eph. 4. 25.

The Second Edition Corrected and Enlarged.

LONDON,
Printed for *John Wyat*, at the *Rose* in St. *Paul's* Church-Yard, 1711.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

Edward Colſton Eſq;

OF

MORTLACK

IN

SURREY.

SIR,

THE Subſtance of the following *Eſſay* was deliver'd occaſionally from the *Pulpit*, as may be perceiv'd by the ſtiffneſs of the Method; but when no excuſe or denial would ſatisfie ſome Friends, unleſs I ſent it to the *Preſs*, I reſolv'd to throw it out of the *Set-Form* of *Sermons* into one ſingle *Treatiſe*. And becauſe it is, of it ſelf, a flat, inſipid, dry Queſtion, *whether all Lying be ſimply and eſſentially Unlawful*; I took the Freedom, as I went over my Diſcour-

ſes thereon, to give the Lines a livelier Turn and Spirit, and to let more Air in upon the Reader, to refreſh him in the Confinement of ſo cloſe and difficult a Controverſy: But how far I have ſucceeded in this Liberty, and whether my reaſoning upon that ſtrict Principle I undertook to mantain, will *look* as cogent and concluſive as it once *founded*, and the Candid *Reader* and *Hearer*, be perſwaded to be of the ſame Opinion, is a point which Experience muſt determine.

I am duly ſenſible of the Difference between ſpeaking to the *Ear*, and to the *Eye*: The *Ear* as Critical and Humerſome as it is, may eaſily be impoſed upon: He who has skill enough to ſet his Voice to the right pitch and *Key* of his Audience, goes a great way in the Buſineſs with ignorant and mean Capacities, it ſufficeth if a Man be loud and vehement, and importune: They love to have the *Goſpel* deliver'd like the *Law*, in *Clouds* and *Thunder*; ſo that if he *cry aloud and ſpare not, and lift up his Voice like a Trumpet*; if he *ſmite with his Hands, and ſtamp with his Feet, and cry alaſs!* He can never never fail of paſſing with

with *ſuch* for an Able Preacher: Cool Reaſon and Calm Senſe, like the ſubtile Matter of *Cartes*, pervades their Ear without touching them. With ſuperficial conceited Hearers, ſtrong Lines, pompous Periods, ſonorous Words, and lofty Sentences, ſhall carry a Man up to a degree of Fame and Eminence. Even with Perſons of Underſtanding and Improvement, a graceful Preſence and Pronunciation ſhall do much to make them believe, they are entertain'd with ſound Senſe and Divinity: But when all the Charms and Arts of true Oratory ſhall happily Combine, it is with that uncontrolable Influence and Enchantment, that tho' the Reaſoning ſhould chance, in any Particular, to be fallacious, yet nothing but the warineſs of a very watchful and diſcerning Judgment will be at leiſure to diſcover it: According to that Reflection of the Son of *Syrach*, *An Eloquent Man is known far and near, but a Man of Underſtanding knoweth when he ſlippeth.*

But now, a Diſcourſe that has been ever ſo plauſibly preſented to the *Ear*, is ſtrip'd of all external Ornaments

and Advantages, when it comes to appear before the *Eye*; which can no more be amus'd with the pleaſing Modulation of Sounds, than the *Ear* can be entertain'd with the beautiful and delectable intermixture of Colours. Beſides, the Eye is an acute and curious Senſe, it is not, like the Ear, to be put off with one tranſient glance of the Matter; but looks cloſely, prys critically, pores thoughtfully, dwells capriciouſly upon every Line; and by going over again, and ſtaring hard upon the defects, is very apt both to multiply and magnify them: Which minds me of what paſſed between *Lyſias*, and a certain Criminal who retain'd him: The *Orator* gives his *Client* the Speech, which he had taken the pains to compoſe in his Defence, that he might peruſe it before hand, for his own Satisfaction: Having read it ſeveral times over, he brings it back to *Lyſias*, very much dejected; telling him plainly that upon firſt reading, it ſeemed indeed an admirable Oration; but after he had narrowly perus'd it three or four times over he could ſee nothing in it but what was ordinary, empty, dull, unaffecting

ing ſtuff: To whom the Orator ſmilingly reply'd, What? and will not once be ſufficient to ſpeak it before your Judges? And yet ſo compleat a Maſter of all the Gifts and Graces of true Eloquence, was as capable as any Man in his Time, next to *Demoſthenes* himſelf, to compoſe what ſhould endure frequent peruſal.

I own the Part I have taken in the Queſtion is ſevere and rigid, and yet, as rigid as it may ſeem, I find, when I am left free to the juſt impartial Dictates of my own Conſcience, I have no doubt or ſcruple about it: All that can induce me to admit the leaſt Suſpicion whether my own Thoughts are true to me, muſt be the great Authority, both Ancient and Modern, that has appear'd on the other ſide: So that when I take a view of the Forces muſter'd up by * *Albericus Gentilis*, the old and new Academicks, the Stoicks, Rhetoricians, Phyſicians, Politicians, Poets, Logicians, Hiſtorians, Civilians, Divines, and even the Holy Scriptures, all drawn out, as it were,

* In Diſput. de abuſu mendac.

in order of Battle, againſt the Point I have engaged to defend; and, at the Head of all, that Author leading on, with a ſingular Spirit and Aſſurance, to revenge the groſs Affronts that have been put upon harmleſs inoffenſive Lying, I cannot diſſemble the concern I have at Heart, to ſee this Controverſy fairly and effectually deter-termin'd. Tho' what I have produced, in Relation to *Authority*, may at the leaſt be allow'd material enough to make that Topick ſtand Neuter. But, to ſpeak ingenuouſly, I have found the Deciſion difficult; and the Difficulty, when come too, pinches at a very nice Point: I will not, therefore be too confident, tho' I humbly preſume, I am with Reaſon, Truth, and Honour: I am very certain, an Error on my ſide will leaſt of all diſturb, or injure Civil Society.

And being once come to a Reſolution of Venturing out this *Attempt* upon the Caſe, it could admit of no long debate with my ſelf, to whom I had beſt *dedicate* and *devote* it: For, tho' your *dwelling* is at a diſtance from us, your Name and Character conſtantly *dwells* among us: And if Men will

will make it the main Buſineſs of their Lives to become Great and Eminent Examples of Piety and Charity, they muſt thank themſelves if they draw after them eſpecial Notice and Eſteem. Beſides, I have not only receiv'd particular Marks of your Courteſy and Friendſhip, but have had the Honour to become, in ſome meaſure, related to you; and therefore was not heedleſly determin'd to this Addreſs.

I acknowledge, I waved the Ceremony of deſiring your Permiſſion for it; *that*, I was affraid, would be to court your expreſs Refuſal: I am ſenſible how little you affect to be publickly, and popularly Diſtinguiſh'd: All the Good you can do with Privacy, you are even Superſtitious to contrive in ſuch a Manner, that *Your Left-Hand ſhall not know what your Right-Hand has done*; you ſuffer no fond Conceit, or unhallowed Affection, to take acquaintance with your Pious Deeds; the World and your ſelf are both with-held in Ignorance, as far as the Concealment of your great Works is Practicable.

But, *Sir*, there are ſome Charities too big, and too Magnificent, to be Skreen'd from Obſervation: There is no rearing and endowing great and Noble *Hoſpitals* of your own, nor being Bountiful upon the Charitable Foundations of others, but it muſt and will look Eminent, and Exemplary: Herein you are Conſtrain'd to Practice after that Illuſtrious Precept of Chriſt, and *Let your Light ſo Shine before Men, that they may ſee your good Works, and Glorify your Father which is in Heaven.* And ſeeing a goodneſs, ſo extenſive and unconfined, can no longer conſiſt with Secrecy, nor Abſcond under a Veil; I muſt not altogether regard, how little ſo modeſt and reſerved a temper as yours will bear, but what the World will expect when your name is mentioned.

" It is well known, that you De-
" ſcended from a *Stock* of Reputable,
" Sound, and Loyal *Anceſtors*: And
" there is no Inhabitant in this your
" *Native City*, who can need to caſt
" about for the Principal Name and
" Family, that has long been Emi-
" nent here, but that of Colston
" muſt,

" muſt, and will come into his Mind
" the Foremoſt. But Hereditary Ac-
" compliſhments give little into the
" Account of Perſonal Merit. It
" has pleaſed Almighty God to ſin-
" gle you out, as a Great and good
" Steward to his Houſehold, and to
" proſper and ſtore you with a For-
" tune, ſutable to ſo high a Truſt:
" A Fortune not ſuddainly ſnatched
" together by the reaches of Unrigh-
" teouſneſs and Oppreſſion, but by
" the Bleſſing of Providence upon a
" diligent and Honourable Courſe of
" Dealing; Not ſordidly and miſerly
" amaſſed together to lie Uſeleſs
" and Inſignificant, nor yet Prodigal-
" ly and Profuſely pour'd out upon
" your own Pomp and Voluptuouſ-
" neſs; but husbanded and adjuſted
" with that True Management and
" Wiſdom, as ſhewed, you did not
" mean to keep, all your Life time,
" encomber'd and crowded up by
" your own Heaps, but at full Liberty
" to move and extend your ſelf: And,
" at maturity of Eſtate and Judgment,
" you entered in good Earneſt up-
" on that Singular Charge, for which
" your Heavenly Maſter ſeems, in a

" moſt particular manner, to have
" called and qualified you: and, at
" an Age while your Healthful and
" manly Days were paſſing, you gave
" your ſelf Chearfully and Diligent-
" ly, to Diſtribute and deal *Out*,
" with a Prudence and Application
" equal to that wherewith you ga-
" thered *In*: And having firſt paid
" Reſpect to Nature, and the Tyes
" of Blood, by adding to the for-
" tunes of Relations, Born above the
" regards of Charity, many Great
" and Noble Enlargements of Gene-
" roſity and Love; you then let your
" ſelf out in Liberalities without Li-
" mits, and beyond Example; and
" ſhed abroad your Bounties about
" the World, whereſoever the Occa-
" ſions of Piety and Charity came in
" your way. The Sums you have been
" ever ſilently ſliding out, through
" ſecret Hands, muſt ariſe to a vaſt Ac-
" count when caſt together, and in
" any other Benefactor beſides your
" ſelf, would deſerve to be particula-
" ly rehearſed and enlarged on, to
" your Eternal Praiſe and Glory:
" But, *Sir*, there are ſuch Noble and
" Stately Fabricks of your Charity

" ſtand

" ſtanding in our way, as Intercept
" our Eye and Obſervation from *thoſe*
" Inſtances of it, which are only leſs
" Conſiderable; and the *Founder* (if I
" may ſo Speak) Swallows up the
" *Benefactor*. How Beautiful and
" Magnificent is that Hoſpitable Receſs,
" which you long ſince rear'd and
" endow'd, for the Reception and
" Support of Good *Livers* fallen to
" Decay! It is the Delight and Ad-
" miration of all Beholders. How
" Glorious, Important, and Com-
" pleat is that Great College you have
" Lately Finiſhed and Enricht, for
" the liberal Education of One Hun-
" dred Poor Boys! And how does it
" Entertain our Eyes, and Rejoice
" our Hearts, when we ſee that Nu-
" merous Family of your *little ones*
" paſſing our Review, in their lovely
" *Decency* and *Order*! A family that
" muſt *give you a Place and a Name,*
" *better than that of Sons and Daughters,*
" Even *an everlaſting Name, that ſhall*
" *not be Cut off!* How many Noble
" Ornaments, and Coſtly Repairs,
" have you beſtowed upon Gods
" Dwelling Places, his Sacred *Houſes.*

" *of Prayer*! And how Efficaciouſly
" has the Zeal of your Heart, as
" well as the Subſtance of your
" Eſtate, put forth and exerted, on all
" Occaſions, for the Proſperity of our
" moſt Holy and Excellent Church!
" Your very Name has been found,
" to have a more Powerful and Pre-
" vailing Influence, for the Good
" Cauſe and Intereſt *Thereof*, than
" the moſt collected Arguments
" and Efforts of other Well-wiſh-
" ers: Which we Humbly Hope,
" has Reconciled You to Our well
" meant Preſumption, in chooſing You
" againſt your Will, to *Repreſent* Us
" in the Great Council of the Nation:
" And the ready Diſpoſition you were
" pleaſed to Expreſs, of *Moving* in
" that Illuſtrious Aſſembly, for the
" Certain and Sufficient Support of
" the Good Clergy of this City, when
" ever their matters ſhould be ma-
" turely digeſted for that end, is a
" Favour, and a Benignity, never to
" be forgotten by them. Above all,
" the moſt Evident and Inexpreſſible
" Good that is done to the Souls of
" this Great People, in Reviving up-

" on

" on their Spirits the Knowledge and
" Love of *Primitive Chriſtianity*, of
" *True Religion and Godlineſs*, and of
" *our Holy and Heavenly way of Worſhip*,
" by that courſe of *Lenten* Sermons,
" which you have moſt Piouſly and
" Generouſly Eſtabliſh'd and Perpe-
" tuated among us, may Juſtly be
" Eſteemed the Crown, and the
" Glory of all your Stupendious Diſ-
" penſations. Diſpenſations of that
" Extenſive and Endleſs Influence
" (whereof our lateſt Poſterity may
" reap the Bleſſed Benefits and Ef-
" fects) as would almoſt tempt one
" to believe, that Great Benefactors,
" who do ſuch Meritorious Things
" while *Living*, do *Live* to deſerve
" and merit, after they are Dead and
" gone; and that the reckoning
" of their Righteous Lives, ſhall not
" ceaſe nor Sum up, till the *General*
" *Audit*; ſeeing their *Good-Works* con-
" tinue *to do Good*, till time ſhall be
" no more. In a Word, the Scores
" of Thouſands which have Iſſued
" out in Bounty from Your Private
" Purſe, to form ſuch mighty *Marks*
" and *Monuments* of Your Goodneſs

" for

" *of Prayer*! And how Efficaciouſly
" has the Zeal of your Heart, as
" well as the Subſtance of your
" Eſtate, put forth and exerted, on all
" Occaſions, for the Proſperity of our
" moſt Holy and Excellent Church!
" Your very Name has been found,
" to have a more Powerful and Pre-
" vailing Influence, for the Good
" Cauſe and Intereſt *Thereof*, than
" the moſt collected Arguments
" and Efforts of other Well-wiſh-
" ers: Which we Humbly Hope,
" has Reconciled You to Our well
" meant Preſumption, in chooſing You
" againſt your Will, to *Repreſent* Us
" in the Great Council of the Nation:
" And the ready Diſpoſition you were
" pleaſed to Expreſs, of *Moving* in
" that Illuſtrious Aſſembly, for the
" Certain and Sufficient Support of
" the Good Clergy of this City, when
" ever their matters ſhould be ma-
" turely digeſted for that end, is a
" Favour, and a Benignity, never to
" be forgotten by them. Above all,
" the moſt Evident and Inexpreſſible
" Good that is done to the Souls of
" this Great People, in Reviving up-

" on

" on their Spirits the Knowledge and
" Love of *Primitive Chriſtianity*, of
" *True Religion and Godlineſs*, and of
" *our Holy and Heavenly way of Worſhip*,
" by that courſe of *Lenten* Sermons,
" which you have moſt Piouſly and
" Generouſly Eſtabliſh'd and Perpe-
" tuated among us, may Juſtly be
" Eſteemed the Crown, and the
" Glory of all your Stupendious Diſ-
" penſations. Diſpenſations of that
" Extenſive and Endleſs Influence
" (whereof our lateſt Poſterity may
" reap the Bleſſed Benefits and Ef-
" fects) as would almoſt tempt one
" to believe, that Great Benefactors,
" who do ſuch Meritorious Things
" while *Living*, do *Live* to deſerve
" and merit, after they are Dead and
" gone; and that the reckoning
" of their Righteous Lives, ſhall not
" ceaſe nor Sum up, till the *General*
" *Audit*; ſeeing their *Good-Works* con-
" tinue *to do Good*, till time ſhall be
" no more. In a Word, the Scores
" of Thouſands which have Iſſued
" out in Bounty from Your Private
" Purſe, to form ſuch mighty *Marks*
" and *Monuments* of Your Goodneſs

" for

" for after Ages, are enough, one
" would think, to be miſſed out of
" a Royal Treaſure: And yet, ſuch an
" All-ſufficient Bleſſing pours down
" upon your Eſtate from Heaven,
" that the more *Abundantly* you deal
" it Abroad, the more ſtill it ſeems
" *Abounding*; like the Widows Oyl,
" ſtill filling up by being ſhed out;
" or, rather, like the Subſtance of
" the Sun, evermore *Conſuming*,
" and never the more Conſumed.
" Your liberality, likewiſe, is well
" Emblem'd in the Light of that Illu-
" ſtrious Planet, being, in Reſem-
" blance thereof, Univerſally Diffu-
" ſive and Beneficial: And the Mo-
" tions of Your Will are ſo perfectly
" free and Unconſtrained, that Im-
" portunity ſerves more to repel, than
" to put it forward; and ſmooth and
" Oily Words, rather to Clog, than
" to ſpeed the regularity of it: And,
" which is the Peculiar Perfection of
" your Character, all the parts of your
" Life are of one intire Piece with
" your Goodneſs: A devout and con-
" ſtant Votary at the Divine Worſhip
" you Encourage, and as Zealous a

" *Perſor-*

" *Performer* as *Promoter*, of all the Pi-
" ous Exerciſes of our Eſtabliſhed
" Church: A Juſt and Punctual Man
" to a Religious Exactneſs: Tempe-
" rate, Sober, and Severe like the
" Firſt *Epheſian* Biſhop; And Vene-
" rable, Grave, and Solemn in your
" outward Aſpect, which well Prefi-
" gures and Deſcribes, the purity
" and integrity of your Mind within.
Theſe few Sketches of your Picture I have careleſly touch'd over, to let the World ſee, what a perfect piece it muſt make, when drawn by a Maſterly Hand at full Length. But by theſe, *Sir*, I have been already too Troubleſome to you; and therefore I will ſtop abruptly here: Intreating you to excuſe the liberty I have taken, and to believe that I am, with all the ſincerity the following Argument Requires,

Sir,

Your Moſt Obliged

Humble Servant,

CHARLES BRENT.

Briſtol Feb. 21 $17\frac{10}{11}$.

THE PREFACE TO THIS EDITION.

IN reviſing this Eſſay, *which was Publiſhed ſeveral Years agone, I have taken the liberty to Correct and improve it, as I thought fit; for which I ſhall not ſtand to make Apologies, ſince every Man is at the ſame Liberty to Buy this Edition, or to let it alone: And he who ſhall ſet the former aſide for* this, *will have no great Damage to Complain of, in Compariſon with what uſually follows of this nature in Books of a larger ſize. The Subject of this Treatiſe is very Nice and Critical, Involv'd with Endleſs Scruples and Difficulties on either ſide; and, as a Conſequence of that, Perplext and Confounded with great Diverſity of Opinions: And yet it is of ſo much Importance and Moment to Civil Society, that it ſhould be ſtated in a juſt and clear Light, and the Guilt of Lying be rendred avowed and Undiſputable, that a Man may well enough be allow'd his Second and more Deliberate Thoughts upon it.* The

The Conſequence of all our Reaſoning on this Subject muſt, in a great meaſure, turn upon the Definition we give of a Lye: Here in therefore I have been a little more expreſs and full than before; For, whereas I had made it to conſiſt in the Diſagreement between what we ſay and what we think, *I have now added, that it be* with Intention to Deceive: *Which Circumſtance was, indeed, imply'd in ſuch a Diſagreement, becauſe a Man ſeldom ſays one thing and means another, but his Deſign is Fallacious: So that this makes very little Alteration in the Thread or Argument of the Diſcourſe it ſelf. And having this ſmall Improvement to make in the State of the Caſe, I took the Opportunity to leave out all that I found Unneceſſary in my former Introduction; which is the reaſon that the three or four firſt Leaves are, in a manner new: And if I have, here and there, melted down a Paragraph, and new Caſt it; or made Additions and Improvements, (as I have not a few,) I am ſo far from thinking it needful to point them out, that I am very deſirous they ſhould fall in ſo ſeaſonably and inſenſibly, as to be altogether unperceiv'd.*

And here I cannot diſſemble the concern I was under, while theſe Sheets were at the

Preſs,

Preſs, to be taught, that the Nature and Formality *of a Lye conſiſted in ſpeaking falſely* with injurious Intention; *as if, in order to be a Lye 'twere abſolutely Neceſſary, that it ſhould be an* Injurious Lye: *Whereas if I ſhould tell the World, I did not hear this Doctrine preach'd when I did, I think I ſhould tell a Lye, tho' it would be far enough from an injurious one. Almoſt all Writers agree, that the Deſign of miſperſwading and deceiving compleats the Notion of a Lye, without farther Reſpect to the wrong that may be meant by it: An injurious Intention ſeems equally culpable, whether in Lying or Truth; And Lying is Lying, and conſequently ſinful, whether injuriouſly intended or not: Herein the Reſolution of* * Biſhop Beverege *is correct and judicious, and worthy to be laid to heart by all Lovers of Sincerity:* I know *(ſays he)* Lyes are commonly diſtinguiſh'd into *officious, pernicious,* and *jocoſe*; and ſome may fanſie ſome of them more tolerable than others: But for my own Part, I think they are all pernicious, and therefore not to be jeſted withal, nor

* *Private Thoughts,* &c. Ed. 4. p. 149.

nor indulg'd, upon any Pretence or Colour whatſoever. *No Man can have a greater eſteem for that Reverend and and Learned Perſon, I have hinted at, than I have; nor can hear him with more Pleaſure, nor have his ſingular and eminent Abilities in higher Admiration; and therefore, he will readily pardon the Fredom of this Animadverſion; which I ſhould not have preſumed to make, if I had not thought it needful to that main End, which both of us have had in view, in our diſcourſes on this Subject; which is, to diſcourage, by all poſſible Efforts, this epidemical and ſcandalous Sin of Lying.*

A Sin ſo univerſally drawn into Mode and uſe, can never be too frequently and forcibly rally'd and rebuk'a: It has almoſt utterly perverted the reaſon and ground of all Expreſſion: *For Men do no longer aim to ſerve others but themſelves, nor to* communicate, *but to* conceal *their Minds by ſpeaking; nay, 'tis an Affectation with the topmoſt Rank, to write their very Names* illegibly; *as if the chief purpoſe of Words and Signs were to render our ſelves unintelligible, and our Name were moſt uſeful and ſignificant, when twiſted up in a Cypher. All that open upright dealing, and inflexible Truth, and Honour, for which*

our Anceſtors were once renowned, is quite worn out; and the Firmneſs and Integrity of British *Souls, decay'd with the robuſtneſs of their Bodies. All our Diſcretion is dwindled into the little arts of Flattery, Deceit, and Cozening; and to gain our ends by Tricking, Diſſembling and Lying, paſſes for moſt conſummate Wiſdom and Conduct. And in this unhappy ſtate of things, Men do no longer conſider or mind, whether what they ſay be true or falſe, but what end they have upon their Hearers in ſpeaking; and by that rule they affirm or deny. And our decorums are perfectly well turn'd to this degenerate Cuſtom; for, as it is made conſiſtent with good Breeding to Lye, ſo 'tis one principal Point of it, not to call it ſo; nor is it he who* tells the Lye, *but he who ſays* 'tis a Lye, *that is the rude, unmannerly Man; which ſhows a peculiar Tenderneſs towards this Sin, or elſe inſufferable Baſeneſs and turpitude in it, that it ſhould be the only* one, *which may not be reprov'd by its proper Name, without Affront. But, be that as it will, it is high time the general Practice of ſo miſchievous and infamous an abuſe of Diſcourſe ſhould be taken under Correction, if peradventure it has not yet prevail'd beyond the power of Diſcourſe to reſtrain it.*

THE

THE CONTENTS.

THE INTRODUCTION. Page. i.

CHAP. I.

Wherein the Nature and Guilt of Lying Conſiſts. p. 1

SECT. I.

What a Lye is. p. Ibid.

SECT. II.

Of ſome Expreſſions which may ſeem to be Lyes, but are not. p. 3

SECT. III.

Of ſome Expreſſions as guilty as Lying, and yet by ſome not thought to be Lyes. p. 28

CHAP. II.

Whether it be Lawful in any Caſe, or upon any Occaſion or Pretence whatſoever to Lye. p. 62

SECT. I.

Some Reflections upon thoſe Authors, who have allow'd of Lying in ſome Caſes. p. Ibid.

SECT.

The Contents.

SECT. II.

Lying is intrinsically, simply, and absolutely Evil. p. 74.

SECT. III.

Whether those Exceptions which have been made, to this general Rule, in some Special Cases, are to be Admitted. p. 98

CHAP. III.

Of the Causes and Inducements to Lying. p. 117

Lying not justified by Scripture Examples. p. 122, *to* 142.

CHAP. IV.

Reasons to put away and detest Lying. p. 167

CONCLUSION.

Wherein some Means are advised to avoid Lying. p. 193

AN ESSAY OF THE Nature and Guilt OF LYING.

The Introduction.

IT ſeems a Misfortune, ſomewhat Peculiar, in this Sin of *Lying*, to be thought little and Harmleſs, and yet to be very great and Provoking; to be leaſt of all Scrupled at in Common uſage, and moſt ſeverely cenſur'd throughout the Sacred Pages; to be dallied with as Venial, and yet Condemned as *Mor-*

tal; to be *lightly eſteemed among Men*, but *an Abomination in the ſight of God*; Diametrically oppoſite to the Divine Nature, which is Truth, and yet ſo Natural, and Familiar in the Mouth of Man, who was made in God's Image, that *David* needed no ſuch excuſe, that he was *Haſty*, when he ſaid, *All Men are Lyers.*

Now, when Men have made free with any deadly Sin, and practiſed upon the Poiſon ſo long, that cuſtom has conquered the preſent Diſeaſe, and Malignity of it, and they venture on Regardleſs, and Inſenſible of Danger, it is no ſuch eaſy thing to awaken them out of their Security, and Reſtore them to a right Underſtanding of their Condition: They muſt be brought to ſee, for themſelves, wherein the Nature and Guilt of their Evil habit Conſiſts: They muſt have their Pretences Anſwered, and their Judgments Convinced, their Affections Intereſted and ſtirred up, and their Conſciences Quickened, and alarmed, before they can bear to be diſabuſed and ſet Right, and prevailed on to lay the Caſe to their Hearts, which ſo nearly concerns them in point of Duty, Wiſdom, Intereſt, and Honour. And this is the deſign that now lies before Me: In the Purſuit whereof I ſhall Endeavour to ſet this ſorry Scandalous Sin of Lying, in ſo Juſt and True a Light, before the Eyes of every Mans Underſtanding, that we may all be directed to See, what a Foul and Dangerous Evil we are Trifling with, when we make no ſcruple to be Guilty of it. And in order hereunto, I ſhall take this following Method,

I. *To*

I. *To ſhow What a Lye is, and wherein the Nature and Guilt of it does Conſiſt.*

II. *To enquire whether it may be Lawful, in any Caſe, or upon any Pretence whatſoever, to tell a Lye.*

III. *To Examine into the many Cauſes, and Inducements, whereby Men have been drawn in, to be ſo eaſily, and univerſally given to this Sin.*

IV. *To Admoniſh, for what good reaſons we are all concerned, to Deteſt and Abandon the Baſe, Pernicious habit of Lying.*

V. Laſtly, *To conclude all with ſome proper, and Pertinent Exhortation, Conſequent to the foregoing Particulars.*

CHAP. I.

Wherein the Nature, and Guilt of Lying does Consist.

SECT. I.

What a Lye is.

A Lye is such a slippery thing to be fasten'd on, and so given to cast it's Skin, and to shift from Shape to Shape, that unless we are Intent upon the Search, we may fansie we have Clinch'd it close, when, upon opening our hold, we shall find it no such thing; and we may let that go for Innocent, and Harmless Speech, which, upon stricter Examination, might have been found an Arrant Lye. To prevent Mistakes, therefore, let us begin with the simplest Idea of a Lye, that first presents to our Minds; and from thence observe, what Circumstances gather about it, by way of Complication, till we have our Notion of this Evil compleat: And, having stated in our View, an exact Idea of a Lye, let us keep the same constantly in our Eye as we go, that we may not, every now and then, Mistake or Forget what it is we are passing our thoughts upon; for want of which Caution, some Considerable Men, upon

on this Subject, have differ'd from themſelves within a very few Leaves.

Now a Lye, at firſt Sight, ſeems to ſtand directly oppoſite to Truth; according to that of St. John, *No Lye is of the Truth:* So that, if we could at all times make ſure of diſcerning, and taking things Aright, and had we but one Plain, and certain way of Expreſſing our ſelves, there could be no great, difficulty in defining a Lye: But, as we may either *Elegantly*, or *Ignorantly*, or *Diſingenuouſly* ſpeak Untruths, we muſt Diſtinguiſh between ſuch as are *Rhetorical*, *Logical*, and *Moral:* A *Rhetorical* Untruth is a known Deviation from the *Letter*, in order to Inculcate the *reality*, with the greater Force and Efficacy; which, when aptly ſpoken, is Elegant, Uſeful, and Commendable: A *Logical* Untruth is, when we ſpeak a falſe Thing unwilfully, and by Miſtake, or, when there is a Diſagreement between the Propoſitions of our Minds, and the Truth of things, which is a Miſunderſtanding, and *Ignorance*, in us, but no Immorality: A *Moral* Untruth is a Falſehood, which we utter knowingly, and *Diſingenuouſly*, and is the Evil we are ſearching after.

A *Rhetorical* Untruth then can bring in very little difficulty to perplex the Queſtion: But the Diſtinction between a *Logical*, and a *Moral* Untruth, is Conſiderable enough to be taken notice of: For it makes ſo much Alteration in the Caſe, that we may ſpeak a falſe thing unwilfully, and not Lye; and a true thing, not believing it to be ſo, and be Guilty:

Much to the ſame purpoſe, ſays * St. *Bernard*, "One Man utters a falſe thing, owning himſelf "doubtful, and does not Lye; Another "Affirms a true thing, not knowing it to "be true, and Lyes: The former does not "mean to Aſſert a Falſehood, but only "that he believes what he really does be-"leive, which is true, tho' the thing he "believes ſhould be falſe; the latter who "Affirms a thing for Certain, which he is "not Certain of, does Lye, although the "thing he ſays ſhould chance to be true. Lying, then is a *Tranſgreſſion* in breach of *Moral* Truth: And ſo, as Truth, in a Moral Senſe, conſiſts in an Agreement between our Words, and our thoughts; A Lye muſt be, a Diſagreement between what we ſay, and what we think. Falſe Speaking, then, I take to be the *General*, or the *Material* part of Lying.

But becauſe, if we would affect a *Logical* exactneſs, there ſhould be both *Genus*, and *Species* in our *Definitions*, as there is required in *perfect Natures*, both *Matter* and *Form*; therefore, to define the nature of a perfect Lye, we muſt give *Form* to the *Matter* of it, and *Specify* what *Sort* of falſe ſpeaking that is, which amounts to Compleat Lying, ſpeaking then, is a *Relative* Gift or Faculty, the way of Senſibly Conveying our Minds one to another. To talk by ones ſelf is abſurd, and Raving; and what we Pronounce in ſuch a delirious manner, whether True or Falſe,

* *Serm.* 17. *in Cant. Eſt qui dubiè profert Mendacium*, &c.

False, does scarce come in to be considered among the Vices of *Discourse:* And therefore, to Speak a Wilful Untruth when alone, cannot properly be called Lying. Nevertheless, when it comes into a Mans Heart, to put his Tongue agoing in a Deliberate Opposition to his Mind, this is a Vitious way of Tampering with Untruth, and trying Practices upon Falsehood: And, if it does not Tantamount to the Sin I am Describing, it comes, at least, under the Condemnation of *Idle Words*, and *Foolish Talking*. But, as I observed, the use of Speaking being *Relative*, it must be supposʼd, in the Nature of the thing, that he who Speaks does intend to be heard, and Understood; and Consequently, that, in a Compleat, and Formal Lye, some one or other must be the Object to whom it is Directed: Agreeable to that First Precept of the Moral Law against this Sin, *Lye not one to Another.*

And because the main end of Speech, is to Create a Correspondence between the minds of Men, and to Assist them in imparting, and interchanging their thoughts, and to supply the want of Mutual Intuition, therefore the whole use, and excellency of it does depend, upon a Reciprocal Faith supposed between Man and Man, in the way of Discourse, that he who Speaks shall utter the true Sence of his Mind, and that he who hears shall give Credit, and Regard to what is said: And hence it must follow, that he who wilfully Speaks a Falsehood to another, does it with a design to make that other be-

lieve it True: And therefore, that in a Lye, properly ſo called, the Perſon to whom it is Spoken is deſigned to be miſperſuaded, and deceived in his Reliance upon our Words: So that Lying ſuppoſes ſome ſort of Communication between the Parties, and a Reciprocal Truſt depending, whereof the Lye is a Breach.

And now we have given *Life* to the *Birth*, and *form* to the *Matter* of a *Lye*; and, to *Falſe Speaking* in *General*, we have added that *Special* Condition which Neceſſarily goes into the Notion of *Compleat Lying*; I mean, the Deſign or Intention of deceiving; according to that of the School-Men, *Cupiditas fallendi pertinet ad Perfectionem Mendacii.* Nor is it Material for what *End* the *Falſe-ſpeaker* intends to Miſperſuade his *Hearer*; it ſuffices, that he tells him a wilful Untruth, on purpoſe to Cheat him into a belief of it, to bring him in Guilty of this Sin. And hence we may define a Lye to be, *A wilful Diſagreement between what we ſay, and what we think, with deſign to Deceive:* Or, according as the Prophet Deſcribes it, to be both *conceiving and uttering, from the Heart, Words of Falſehood.*

Once more; Tho' Lying does properly, and ſtrictly regard our Speech, yet it does not ſtop there: For we may pretend to Reveal our Minds by *Letters*, and *Signs*, and *Geſtures*, and *Intimations*, as well as by word of Mouth: And therefore, taking this Sin in the largeſt Senſe and Extent, we may call it a Lye, *when we Commune with another*,

ther, by any False Expression, Sign, or Gesture, with Intent to Impose upon his belief.

But then, some Distinction must be placed here, between such Signs and Gestures as have, and such as have not their known, and stated Significations; between such as are, and such as are not *Conversible*, and *Creditable*; in plain terms, between such as we do, and such as we do not pretend to *Commune* withal. For, as Men have, by custom and agreement, brought such and such Expressions, and Gestures to carry such certain Determinate Meanings with them, and to be esteem'd the proper Images of our thoughts, so that it may be well known what we ought to Import by them, if we deal sincerely; So there are other Voices, and Motions which are Uncertain and Arbitrary, and, not being Instituted or fixed to any known, avow'd Significations, are Variable, and to be used at Pleasure.

Now, that reciprocal Faith, which is supposed between Man and Man, in the use of Signs and Gestures, is depending only upon the former sort; And if we have Recourse to such as are agreed, and known to be Significant, and are become proper Means for the Communication of our thoughts, and are what we pretend to Converse, and Commune with, and to depend and rely upon, there is, no doubt, a *Tye* and a *Duty* upon our Consciences, to be Faithful and Sincere in the use of them, and in Misleading, and Deceiving the Belief of others, by such Conversible, trusty Signs and Gestures, we are as Guilty of Lying, as if

we Impos'd upon them by ſo many Expreſs Words.

As for ſuch *Voices*, *Signs*, and *Motions* as are not Ordained, or Accuſtomed to any known and certain Significations, but are uſed at Diſcretion, and are many times without any particular meaning at all; as we do not pretend to Converſe or Commune with them, nor plight any Sincerity or Honour in the uſe of them, ſo we are not preſently to be charged with Lying, if others, by unwarrantably undertaking to gueſs at out Minds by them, do find they have been miſtaken: If Men will over-rate their own ſagacity ſo far, as to fanſie they can penetrate, and dive into our Hearts, by ſuch uncertain diſcretionary ſigns of ours, as we our ſelves do not Profeſs to be Underſtood, and Credited in the uſe of, they may thank themſelves if they are deluded: The deception is of their own ſeeking.

For Example. When the Beſieged, in the *Capitol*, threw down their Bread prodigally into their Enemies Camp, this was an Arbitrary, Precarious Sign of no certain Eſtabliſhed Signification, nor made uſe of upon good Faith, but for Amuſement; If therefore, the *Gauls* would needs underſtand by it, that the *Romans* had Proviſion enough, and to ſpare, they were acceſſary to their own Errour, and could not charge the Beſieged with offering them a Lying Sign, who did not pretend any ſincere meaning, nor expect any Credit in the uſe of it: But when the *Tribune* call'd out intelligibly to *Brennus*, and ſounded a *Parley*, and Hung out a Flag of *Truce*; ſuch ſigns

ſigns and Expreſſions being, from conſtant uſage and conſent, underſtood to beſpeak a *Confidence*, and to be Significant Invitations of entring into Terms of *Treaty*, there was no falſifying or deceiving by *them*, without the Guilt of Perfidious Lying. So then, to deſcribe this Sin in the largeſt compaſs and Extent; *It conſiſts in Communing Unſincerely and Falſely, by any known Expreſſions, or Signs, in which we propoſe to be underſtood and credited, with Intention to Miſperſuade and Deceive.* This Account I have given of the Nature and Guilt of Lying is, I am perſuaded, ſo Exact and Juſt, that, upon Examination, all Innocent Expreſſions will ſtand juſtified, and all Lyes Convicted, and Condemned by it.

SECT. II.

Of ſome Expreſſions which may ſeem to be Lyes, but are not.

I. ALL Innocent and Allowable Expreſſions are, according to the foregoing State of the Caſe, juſtify'd, howſoever, at firſt glance, they may ſeem to partake of Lying: I will mention and reſolve ſome of the moſt Remarkable of this Sort: And they are, chiefly ſuch as come under the Notion of *Rhetorical* Untruths. And,

1*ſt.* It

1*ſt.* It may be ſaid of *Fables*, *Romances*, *Parables*, and *Poetical Fictions*, that the Author, who invents them, does not believe them to be True. Right! Neither does he utter them for True Relations, nor deſign they ſhould be received as ſuch: He both knows them to be Inventions, and he does Publiſh them for Inventions, ſo that he delivers them for what they really are, and has no deſign that they ſhould be otherwiſe received and taken: In all which tho' there be much Inventing, there is no ſuch thing as Lying: The Perſon's intention is all the while juſt, and pure; inſtead of aiming to deceive, his main purpoſe is to benefit; both to pleaſe and inſtruct at the ſame time. Thus, while the hearer is held intent with the fine Fiction, the Moral couched underneath, ſteals in along with it unawares, and comes upon his mind with a ſort of Surpriſe, that ſtrikes a livelier Image and Impreſſion: Truth invelloped in a Fable, is like the brightneſs of the Sun under an Eclipſe: the ſtrangeneſs of the thing draws after it particular Obſervation, and then of a ſuddain when the obſcurity is taken of, both the Truth and the Light break out upon us, with ſo much the ſtronger force and vehemence.

2. It may be ſaid, in many *Figurative* Expreſſions, that if our words were to be taken *Literally*, and ſtripped of the *Figure*, we ſpeak otherwiſe than we think; as in *Ironies*, *Hyperboles*, *Metaphors*, and the like.---- It may be ſo; but to ſtrip a *Figurative* Expreſſion of *Figure*,

Figure, and purpoſely to catch it in a Lye, is hard uſage; the mean while, as long as it is a Figure, it may be allowed to ſtand upon its defence; and the vindication of it is very eaſie, and obvious; for, the ſame Arbitrary Cuſtom which has ſetled certain meanings upon words, has done the ſame upon ſuch kind of Figures; ſo that it is not more agreed and underſtood, that a plain aſſertion ſhall be taken juſt as the words lie, than it is, that ſuch *Tropes* ſhall be taken with that allowance, which their ſpecial *turn* and *emphaſis* is wont to demand. Farther, that ſuch Figures are as fit and neceſſary, in their proper places, to expreſs our true meaning, as plain words at other times are without them, is from hence very clear, in that they reſulted originally from *Nature*, not from *Art*; and they were ſpoken with ſucceſs, before ever they were defin'd and taught; they were in the *Orations* of *Demoſthenes*, before they were in the *Rhetorick* of *Ariſtotle*; and if at any time they are forced and ſtrained, and do not ſpring from *Nature*, they are *falſe* and *lying* Oratory. And farther yet, as Men took *naturally* to uſe them, for the more effectual ſignification of their Minds, ſo it is altogether as *natural* to apprehend them rightly, when they are fitly us'd and apply'd; and they are ſo far from being a lying abuſe of Speech, that plain Speaking would not anſwer all the ends of it without them. We have often occaſion to make known our Minds with reſentment, with vehemence, and ſurprize, and to ſtrike vigorouſly upon the ſeveral Paſſions of Men; and then, there

muſt

must be something singularly significant, and emphatical, in the very *Mode* of our Speech; that is, we must and shall of course be *Figurative*; and without being so, we can hardly make the full sense, and moving of our minds so truly understood: And that there is no such thing as Lying in the use of such Figures, will appear at last by this, that Lying is generally designed to impose upon the Person attending; but if when we speak figuratively, Men will resolve to take us literally, we are the Persons disappointed and deceived, not they: So then, if our words, taken with regard to the special *turn* and *emphasis* we give them, do, according to the known custom and use of Speech, signifie just as we mean, and we have no intent to be otherwise apprehended, but rather to have the full sence of our Minds more effectually understood, all this is just, and elegant, and far enough from Lying; and if Men will, after all, be such Fools, or such Knaves, as to *take* Occasion to misapprehend where none is *given*, the Falsehood is their own, not ours; *Qui capit ille facit.* To come to Instances.

1*st*, In an *Irony*: 'tis true, the bare words of that Figure are just the contrary to a Man's true meaning; as if I should say, *yes, you are marvellously honest!* when, at the same time, I think you a very Knave. But what then? the Man to whom I speak will be very apt, by my way of pronouncing, to pick out of those Words the true sence of my Mind: for as in the *Greek* Tongue, a different *Accent* put upon the same Word, shall give it a quite different

different Signification, ſo it is with our Expreſſions; the different manner of Speaking, and the particular tone of the Voice, ſhall alter the meaning of them to a perfect contrariety, as in the Example given; in which way of Expreſſing my ſelf, I am ſo far from differing from what I think, that I do thereby more effectually give ſuch a Man to underſtand my true Thoughts of him, than if I ſhould have queſtion'd his Honeſty in ſo many direct Words: An Irony *ſtrikes* a Man's Mind with a *back Blow*, which, while it ſeems to withdraw the Weapon, brings the Stroak ſuddainly about, with the ſurer and ſeverer Execution; thus, when imperious, haughty *Michal* receiv'd her Huſband, after he had led up the Dance before the Ark, with this Salutation, *How Glorious was the King of* Iſrael *to Day!* what Words could be more full of *Panegyrick* and *Applauſe?* and yet, what could be more *Satyrically* and *Diſdainfully* ſaid? She might have ſpar'd explaining her ſelf in the ſame Breath, for *David* underſtood full well, that *ſhe deſpiſed him in her Heart*, and his Reſentment left her to be ſenſible of it. 'Tis obſervable therefore, that when this Figure is ſpoken, there is uſually ſome Provocation given to prepare the way for it; as in that notable reply of *Galba*, which, tho' it look'd like out-lying another, was in effect but reprehending a Lye, by a monſtrous out-ſtretching *Irony*: One tells him at Table, that he had bought *Lampreys* in *Sicily* above five foot long; pho! ſaid he, that's a Jeſt! they take them in that Country ſo large and long, that they are commonly

commonly made uſe of for Cables. Tho' I confeſs freely, I do not like *Ironizing* at that extravagant Rate; 'tis making very bold with Truth, and trifling upon the borders of Lying too Familiarly.

But otherwiſe, where a juſt Occaſion is given to be ſevere, and the expreſſion is natural and pure, this way of reprehending with an *Irony* has great Force and Pungency with it, and is ſo far from being unjuſtifiable, that we find it ſanctified by the unerring word of God: An unhappy Inſtance whereof was that, whereby the Almighty upbraided our diſobedient Sires, when diſmiſſing them at the gate of Paradiſe: The Serpent had compaſs'd their Ruine, by inveigling them with this plauſible Lye; *God doth know that in the Day you eat thereof, then your Eyes ſhall be opened, and ye ſhall be as Gods, knowing Good and Evil.* Upon this, at parting, God takes Occaſion to rally them upon the Folly of that Imagination, after this Manner; *Behold the Man is become like one of us, to know Good and Evil!* In which Words he was the fartheſt in the World from ſpeaking or meaning literally, and yet as far from Lying too; for, by the manner and turn of the Expreſſion, 'tis very evident, he intended both to ſpeak, and to be underſtood in a quite contrary Sence; his Deſign was to awaken their Hearts to a due Concernment at their Miſtake; and to do this, a direct and plain Aſſertion would not have been ſo effectual: How lifeleſs and flat, and unaffecting would it have ſounded, to have told them *See now, you are not as Gods knowing Good*

Good and Evil! They knew this full well already; but, by that Ironical Invective, God lodged the Reflection of it upon their Minds the more ſeverely; and ſent the Wretches out, pondering upon the curſed Cheat and Lye the Serpent put upon them; and left it for a Warning to them, how they ever truſted again the falſe Inſinuations of the Devil.

2*dly*, Something like this may be ſaid of all *Hyperboles*, whether we ſpeak expreſly *more*, or *leſs* than we think. The Deſign of this Figure is to raiſe Admiration; and then, ſomewhat Extraordinary muſt be ſaid; and when there is a proper Occaſion for it, and the Hyperbole is deliver'd with a ſincere deſign, a Man will naturally word himſelf in ſuch a manner, as it ſhall appear he does not look to be taken ſtrictly, nor purpoſe to perſuade, either to more, or leſs, than what is true; there is therefore ſtill a right and fair agreement between his Expreſſion, and his Mind. For Inſtance, in a *Mioſis*, or leſſening *Hyperbole*; when our Lord ſays, *a grain of Muſtard is leſs than the leaſt of all Seeds*; this is not literally true, becauſe there are Seeds of things in Nature extreamly leſſer: But yet this, in the Place and Manner as he us'd it, was an Expreſſion proper, and ſuitable to his right Meaning; namely, that it was a very little Seed, and, for the Size of it, 'twas an Admiration it ſhould produce ſuch a large and over-ſpreading Plant. Again, for an inſtance of Enlargement, St. *John* at the concluſion of his Goſpel, has theſe Words: *And there are alſo many other things which*

Jeſus

Jeſus did, the which if they ſhould be written every one, I ſuppoſe that even the World it ſelf could not contain the Books that ſhould be written. Now, howſoever theſe Words, ſtrictly taken, may look like *amplifying*, yet, with the due Abatement of this Figure, the Senſe of *them* was truly the Apoſtle's Mind; which, being more temperately expreſs'd, amounts to no more than this; that *there were a* world of things *more which Jeſus did, which were not written in that Book.* * What *Seneca* obſerv'd of this kind of Figure was very acurate, *Nunquam tantum ſperat Hyperbole quantum audet; ſed incredibilia affirmat, ut ad credibilia perveniat:* "The Hyperbole "does not ſo much as hope for your Aſſent, "as far as it pretends to go, but it affirms "things *incredible*, that it may gain you as "far as they are *credible*.

3*dly*, All kinds of *Metaphors* and *Allegories* crave Allowance under the ſame Conſideration; they may ſeem to aſſert what is not *real*, but they mean only to expreſs an apt *Reſemblance*; the want of taking them in this juſt and obvious Sence, has been the Occaſion of breeding a great deal of ill Blood in the Chriſtian Church. For Inſtance, when our Lord gave the Sacramental Bread to his Diſciples with this Expreſſion, *This is my Body:* The *Catholicks*, by taking him too ſtrictly and literally, ſtruck out from thence that inſupportable Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation.* Now, 'twas

* De Ben. l. 7.

'twas plain, Chriſt neither meant nor expected *ſo* to be underſtood, for his own *Bodily* Preſence, and the very *Hand* which gave the Bread, was ready to witneſs againſt him. Indeed, if upon ſaying the Words, he had inſtantly vaniſh'd, they might have imagin'd (but God knows how!) that his Body paſs'd the ſame moment into the Manchet; but while it ſtill remain'd obvious both to their Sight, and Touch, as before, nothing could be more ſelf-evident than this, that he could not give his *Body* to them in a peace of *Bread*, and yet ſtill have his *Body* to himſelf, in his own proper *Fleſh* and *Blood* at the ſame time; And how could he think the World ſhould ſo groſly miſtake him, againſt all Sence and Reaſon, that the *Bread* he gave them was his *Real Body*, which, they ſaw, he did not give them? the Error therefore was their own, and it looks too much like a wilfull one; his Expreſſion had no appearance of ſuch an Untruth ſignified in it, but was a Chaſt and Myſtical *Allegory*.

If you meet with theſe kind of *Figures* often in Scripture, and find them ſometimes to be bold and hardy, you muſt not be ſurpriz'd; for the Revelations of God not only condeſcended to the Capacities of Men, but had alſo a ſpecial regard to the way and manner of Speech which was moſt in uſe in thoſe Countries where they were given; now, they tell us, that the way of Speaking and Writing in thoſe *Eaſtern* Parts of the World, ran mightily upon ſuch Figurative Strains: and this Hint, with the Examples given,

given, may be of some use to unlearned Readers of the Bible; keeping always this Note in their Minds as they go, that where the literal Sence will not do, there, in all likelihood, they have some such Figure as has been mention'd; and they are far from Lying; they are fit and significant ways of Speaking to be understood in a borrow'd Sence; and when the Author intends sincerely, he will of Course frame them so, that it shall not be natural to mistake him.

3*dly*, As *Figures* are wont to alter the plain and ordinary Sence of *Words*, and give them a different Meaning; so the Laws, and some standing *Customs* which are instead of *Laws*, do, in some special Cases, impose the use of certain *Forms* of Words, in quite another Signification from what *they* would have, if we were to express the same as the free conceit of our own Minds. Now, Words being in themselves arbitrary, and to be taken in all Cases, according as the Customs and Institutions of Men have provided they shall signifie; it follows, that when we come to use such certain forms of words, upon occasion, in pure compliance with the Customary, or legal Practice, we are understood to mean just as much by them, and no more than, as they are intended from the Nature of the Institution to mean; and consequently, that we are not presently to be charged for Lying, tho' the words we speak in such occasional and special forms, would in their plain and ordinary sence, be different from what we intend and think.

I am of opinion, that the *Nolo Epiſcopari*, or Modeſt Refuſal, uſed Antiently by Nominated Biſhops; that our Modern *diſabling Speeches*; and, that our uſual ſtrains of Ceremony, ſuch as ----- *I am your moſt Humble Servant*, &c. May fairly be accounted for under this Conſideration: But the moſt Materiál Inſtance, which may deſerve to be excuſed, and vindicated in this place, is that which follows: For,

Since, by the conſtant Practice of our *Courts*, a Criminal muſt plead, *Not Guilty*, to his Indictment, before he can have the benefit of a legal Tryal, and the Law does intend and expect he ſhould mean no more by ſaying ſo than, *that it does not yet appear to the Court he is Guilty*; therefore, tho' in common ſpeaking, for a Man to ſay he is not Guilty, when he knows in his own Heart he is Guilty, be a direct and palpable Lye, yet when the ſame words, *not Guilty*, being anſwered in *form* at the *Bar*, are, in the ſence of Cuſtom and the Law, underſtood to mean no more than *not evidently Guilty*; a Man who is conſcious enough to himſelf, may notwithſtanding uſe that form in ſuch a ſence, without the Crime of Lying, when it is before the Fact has been *witneſs'd* and *found* againſt him: For certainly, for a Man to ſignifie, by a ſet form of words provided for that occaſion, that his guilt is not yet made evident to the Court, when in truth it is not, is no Lye; there is yet a good agreement between his expreſſion and his mind; for that Rule of the very Learned

Learned and Judicious * *Puffendorf*, is, I think, unquestionable; *Vocabula publici usus, vim suam habere ex impositione publicâ*; words that are instituted for publick use and form, ought to be taken in the sence and force of the Imposers; which is sometimes different, from what the same words do signifie in common acceptation. It being therefore a *Maxim* among us, that *no Man is bound to accuse himself*; I conceive it reasonable to understand the Question put by the Court, *How sayest thou? Guilty, or not Guilty?* In no other sence than as if it had been said, "Is "thy guilt so evident and undeniable, that "thou art willing to save the Court the trou- "ble of a Tryal, and by a frank Confession to "bespeak our mercy, as appearing by such a "Confession to be a true Penitent; or wilt "thourather stand upon thy Innocence, and "consequently abide by the Justice of the "Court? And if this be the legal import of that formal Question upon an Indictment, then the words *not Guilty*, returned in answer by the Prisoner, must be understood in a like sence as if he had said, "whether I have "committed the Crime whereof I am accused "or not, seeing I am not bound to accuse my "self, and it does not yet appear that I have "done it, I chuse to abide my Trial, having "more hope of being acquitted by the Justice "of the Court, for want of Evidence, than of "obtaining Pardon for my Offence, if I should "own my self Guilty. Indeed, if when the Question

* De Jur. Nat. &c. l. 5. c. 1. §. 4.

Qaeſtion is put to the Criminal, *Guilty, or nor Guilty?* He were at his own liberty to return the Court an anſwer in what words he pleaſed, he would be a down right Lyar, and inexcuſable, if he ſhould ſay *not Guilty*, when he was conſcious of his Crime, becauſe then he ought to be underſtood, as meaning the words in their natural and common acceptation; but when the Law puts words into his Mouth, and will take no other anſwer from him but *Guilty, or not Guilty*, and yet means not to force any Man to be his own *Accuſer*, I think they ought to be underſtood in ſome ſuch ſence as before expreſſed; and then, when the Priſoner anſwers, *not Guilty*, he ought not to be taken as affirming his innocence, but as denying the notoriety of the Fact to the Court, and craving a legal Trial, whether it can be made appear he is Guilty, or not. *A good Old Engliſh Author, who is otherwiſe of Opinion that all Lying is utterly and abſolutely ſinful, is yet for *giving* ſome ſuch allowance for the Priſoner's Plea. *For*, ſays he, *when Men plead not Guilty, it is not much unlike in ſence, tho' different in words, as if they ſhould ſay, I will not diſcover my Faults, by acknowledging my ſelf Guilty, and accuſe my ſelf, ſeeing the Law does not require it: But I will, for my purgation, put my ſelf upon Trial, and ſtand (upon the Examining of Witneſſes) to the Verdict of the Jury, to be Acquitted, or Condemn'd, according to* their *Evidence, directing their Conſcience.* In fine,

* J. Downham.

fine, I cannot see why it should be any more a Lye in the *Criminal* to answer, *not Guilty*, than it is in the *Court* to alledge positively in the Inditement, he is Guilty, before the certainty of the thing has appear'd either way: Nay, the Indictment Charges the matter home with so many special, aggravating, grievous Circumstances, that tho' the Man be conscious of having done the Fact, he may generally answer safely, as his own sence, *not Guilty* in the form and manner as Charged, and at the same time not utter a false Proposition, nor say more than he does really think.

4. It may be said that, in the way of *Disputation*, it is a common practice to affirm one thing, and think another: To this I answer, that to affirm and argue on the false side, with intent to persuade the Respondent into an Error, is, no doubt, of the nature of deliberate Lying; but when it is with consent, only for Argument sake, to try what may be said on both sides; this hath nothing of the Lye in it, because we are not to be taken as expressing the real sence of our Minds, but only as signifying our intention to offer, what may be objected against the Truth; and when our words are agreed and known before, to be significant only of such an intent, then they are no enuntiation of a false-hood, but of our real mind and meaning. *Authors* are wont, thus far, to make bold with themselves; and able if *Aquinas* were answer for a Lye, in his every *videtur quod non*, his *Summa totius*, &c. would be too much for one Man to give an account for.

5. Well,

5. Well, but after all, what *Salvo* can be found in the fore-stated account of a Lye, for talking false things to Madmen and Ideots? I answer; Sufficient excuse and allowance for *this*, as far as it appears Requesite, and Proper, may fairly be Granted, upon two Distinct Considerations: For,

1*st*. Some Judicious Men are of opinion, that this may be allowed to take shelter under the Shadows of *Rhetorick*, and to pass for Figurative Speech, Accommodated to the Capacities of those to whom it is Spoken: And I hope I have said enough already to answer for *Rhetorical* Untruths.

I confess, this is a very bold and hardy kind of *Trope*, and such as we are not used to meet with in our Books of *Oratory*; And therefore it ought as cautiously, and rarely to be medled with as possible: It being so far of the Nature of an *Hyperbole*, that if not sincerely, and seasonably uttered, relapses into round Lying; And this caution is more especially necessary, against the telling Bugbear, Scaring Tales, to Startle and Terrifie the tender fancies of Children, there being seldom any good or useful end to justifie the foolish custom, but very probably the contrary.

It is ill Management, to make a Practice of *Belying* Children into Groundless and Pannick fears: They are, certainly, to be Disciplined, and Restrain'd much better without it. *Plato* would not endure it in his

Scheme of Education: * He forbids *that Matrons should affright their Children with Fabulous Tales of Spirits and Demons, and Hideous Apparitions, haunting about the Neighbour-hood in the dead of Night:* And, for two very good reasons, *For*, said he, *they do, in effect*, **Blaspheme the Divine Powers**, and *they render the Spirits of Youth Timorous and Dastardly*, by such a silly, senseless method.

But to *Falsifie* with Ideots, Children, and Distracted Persons, when it appears Necessary to make them apprehend what is fit for them, is a sort of Figure cast upon their Fancies, which seems Innocent, and *Rhetorical* enough; being an *art of persuading* them, when nothing else will. † *Puffendorf* calls this, *fictus et coloratus sermo:* And I cannot say, but there is good Countenance, and Authority for it in the Word of God. For when, in warning of Children or Ideots from being disorderly in our Absence, we tell them, *there is a Bird that will come, and Whisper to us all the Rude, and Naughty Tricks, they do out of our sight*; is not this, *of kind* with that awful, and Elegant Admonition of the Wise Man? *Curse not the King, no not in thy Thought, and Curse not the Rich in thy Bed-chamber; for a Bird of the Air shall carry the Voice, and that which hath Wings shall tell the matter.*

The use of this Figurative way of Speech, in Condescending from what is *Real* and *Litteral*, to what we think will best *Humour* and

affect

* De. Rep. l. 2. εἰς θεοὺς βλασφημῶσιν.
† De off. Hom. lib. 10. Sect. 6.

affect the *weak*, and *distempered* Capacities of those we Speak to, is, if I mistake not, that which God himself is pleased to have Recourse to, in his Revelations to Mankind. For, our minds are, in respect to the Perfect Mind of God, as weak and incompetent, as the Minds of Children and Lunaticks are to us; and we are no fitter to be talkt to, upon the square of Truth, and Reality, in things Appertaining to God and another World, than they are, in respect to the things of this World: And, therefore, as God, when he would *Commune* with us *of Heaven and Hell*, and of things relating to a *Future State*, whereof we can, at present, have no proper and adequate Conceptions, is wont to come down from *Reality* to *Figure*, and Discourse to us by Words and Images, which tho' not literally true, are the fittest to Humour and Strike our Fancies; So may we be allowed, where it appears Necessary, to Descend, in our Discourses, from direct *Truth* and *Reality*, and Commune with Children, and Incompetent Persons, by any plausible *Figure*, or *Fiction*, which we think will be likeliest to obtain the *Just* and *True* ends of our Talking with them: We may tell them, that a dose of Physick is a Glass of Wine, that any thing is *any thing*, how absurd and opposite soever, when it is to move, and influence them to take things the same way as it is necessary they should: This is their notion who excuse Untruths of this kind as Metaphorical.

And this Solution of the difficulty seems just, and rational enough; and there is room in *Rhetorick* to have recourse to such

hardy *Figures*, when the occaſion is Extraordinary, and out of the way of Nature. But, if this ſhould not be ſuppoſed to reach the caſe, and give Satisfaction, there is yet a more direct and plain reply to be made, which will clear this way of diſcourſing with *Incompetent* Perſons, from being Incumbered with the Guilt of Lying. For,

2*dly*. We have obſerved, that Speech is a *faculty* which bears a neceſſary *Relation*, from the mind of one Man to the Mind and Underſtanding of another, and that therefore, in a Deliberate and Formal Lye, ſome other Apprehenſive Intelligent Perſon, who is the Object of it, is deſign'd to be miſled, and impos'd upon: But we cannot ſo properly be ſaid to *miſlead* another, who is already *beſide* himſelf; nor to *deceive* one, who is in a ſtate of utter *Miſapprehenſion*; nor to impoſe upon his Underſtanding, in whom no ſuch thing as *Right Underſtanding* appears: To with-hold the truth and reality of things from ſuch a Perſon, is no more to miſlead or deceive him, than it would be to put out a Candle to a Blind Man in the Dark. In a Word, The proper uſe and end of Speaking, in the Relation it has, in point of Faith and Honour, between the Speaker and the Hearer, does not remain, or depend in this Particular Caſe. And therefore, as Lying is Relative in its Nature and Guilt, and does Reſpect our Unſincere, and Diſingenuous aim to impoſe upon anothers Underſtanding or belief, there ſeems to Lie no juſt Impeachment of it, in ſuch Preternatural Inſtances as theſe.

To

To conclude this part of my Subject.---It is so far from being right, that all untrue Expressions, when Rhetorically and sincerely meant, are Lyes, that there are Unjustifiable, and Culpable ways of False-speaking, which however, cannot properly be called Lying. For Example, when a Man shall wilfully, and wantonly affirm untrué Propositions to himself, and talk in Contradiction to his own belief and Understanding when alone, and let his Tongue loose in such False Soliloquies, which if Spoken to misguide the minds of others, would be Palpable Lyes; this, no doubt, is a Corrupt and Crazy Misapplication of Speech, but it is not in Strictness, Lying; because no one is intended to be deceived, or Misperswaded thereby. According as * *Malder*, Bishop of *Antwerp*, well Distinguished, *Falsum quidem est, sed non fallax, ubi idem est dicens, & audiens. It is a Falsehood, but not a Lye, when the same Man is both Speaker and Hearer.* But this I have touched on, and Dismissed already.

Again, Supposing two Men should *enter the Lists* in the way of *Lying*, and *vye* with one another at *Invention*, and *stretch* for a Wager, (A Case which, if it has not been put, we may be sure has been Practised) this being done without any design of deceiving on either side, both being Conscious, and Aware what they are doing, will not, therefore, come under the Proper Notion, and account of Lying; And yet, surely, such an

* De restrict. ment. abus.

Idle, Scandalous way of Worrying Truth, can never paſs, with any Senſible Stander by, for an Innocent, and Commendable Exerciſe of the Tongue.

Once more, If another Man give me leave to entertain him with a Falſe Story; Or if I give him notice, before hand, that I will; Or if I let my Tongue looſe in a Ramble of Romances, and Rhodomontados, not ſo much to gain the *belief* of the Company as their *Laughter*; this, tho' not ſtrictly Lying, becauſe not utter'd for the ſake of deceiving, is, nevertheleſs, ſuch a Degenerate Unmanly Licence, and abuſe of Speech, as deſerves to be cenſured, and hiſſed out of Society. And if, as the Author of *Wiſdom* ſaid, *There is no word ſo Secret that ſhall go for nothing*; And more eſpecially if, according to a much greater Maſter of Wiſdom, *Every Idle Word that Men ſhall Speak, they ſhall give an account thereof at the Day of Judgment*; we cannot eſteem ſuch freedom, and Familiarity with Falſehood, to be a thing Indifferent, and Guiltleſs. By this Tranſition, therefore, I am inſenſibly carry'd over to the other ſide of the Queſtion.

SECT.

SECT. III.

Of ſome Expreſſions as guilty as Lying, and yet by ſome not thought to be Lyes.

II. I Shall now proceed to ſhew, that, by the account and ſtate I have given of Lying, all Deceitful and Guilty Expreſſions of this kind are condemned; accordingly I ſhall note a few Caſes, wherein Men are wont to Lye, even while they would fain make us believe that their Words and their Minds agree exactly. We blame the Church of *Rome* (indeed too juſtly!) for teaching and defending large allowances of this kind: 'Tis true, as Profeſſors of *Chriſtianity*, their Caſuiſts declare ſtrenuouſly againſt the Sin of Lying in general; but then they are not ſo rigid and ſtrait laced, but they let the People out looſe enough to it in other forms and diſguiſes, in equivocations, reſerves, and dumb ſigns; they may falſify by ſuch kind of evaſions, if they do it with a good Grace, pretty freely: Nor are we ſo clean *reform'd* from the *Romiſh* Errors, but that blemiſhes of this kind are notorious enough in Perſons who call themſelves ſound *Proteſtants*; they will equivocate and diſſemble, and ſhift from the truth, without much ſcruple, when their Conſciences would not endure them in telling a direct Lye. Now my buſineſs is not to turn aſide here, and argue diſtinctly the

unlawfulneſs of ſuch Practices; I am now proceeding to ſhew that in reality they are no otherwiſe than Lyes, only out of tenderneſs expreſs'd under a fairer appearance and diſguiſe; and being once prov'd to be Lyes, the guilt and wickedneſs of them will come to be conſider'd under that notion afterward.

1. Firſt then, I ſay, tho' a Man may make a ſhift, by a lucky *turn* or *quibble*, to be true to his *expreſs* words, yet if he be not true to what he really *meant* by them, he is guilty; for *God requireth Truth in the inward parts*, and it is the fallacious diſagreement between our real meaning, and our words or ſigns, that makes the Lye. For inſtance, ſhould I affirm, upon occaſion, that I have not been abſent from my home for three *Days* paſt, and one ſhould truly alledge on the contrary, that he ſaw me abroad but a Night agoe, it is in vain for me to reply, that I only affirmed as to the *Days*, and not the *Nights*; for if it were my intent to make another believe I was not forth during the full ſpace of three *Days*, including the *Nights*, that pitiful *Quibble* will not bring me off, I am guilty of the Lye.

It has therefore been always charged as a Vile *Blot* in the bravery of the *Spartan Hero*, that, having concluded a *Ceſſation* with the Men of *Argos* for *Seven Days*, he ſhould fall *foul* upon them the *third Night*; and, while they were buryed in Sleep, and the dead of darkneſs, ſhould put them all to the Sword; alledging,

alledging, that no *Nights* were expreſſed in the *terms* of Truce: No doubt, it was a Perfidious, Salvage breach of Faith, unworthy of *Cleomenes*, and providence took a time to deal it *home* to Him.

It may be ſaid, that ſometimes it would be expedient Men ſhould have ſuch plauſible pretences to content themſelves, in fulfilling rather the letter, than the prime and ſtrict meaning of what they ſay, eſpecially in all threats and declarations of vengeance; in which Men would often, in cool Blood, be much better ſatisfied, their words could be made good without Execution, than with it. for Example;

When *Aurelian* ſwore, he would utterly deſtroy *all*, even, the very *Dogs*, that he found alive in *Thyan*, if they did not Surrender before the Storm; although they refuſed, and ſtood it out, till he carry'd the place by Aſſault, yet, being on ſecond thoughts inclined to Mercy, he choſe rather to perform the Letter, than the full intent of his Oath; and ſo gave order to put all the *Dogs* to the Sword, but to ſpare the Men.

Take another Example in *Alexander*; in a deſperate rage he reſolved, that he would make an utter end of *Lampſacus* by Fire and Sword; and apprehending he ſhould be powerfully ſet upon, by the Subtile Orator *Anaximenes*, to ſhew mercy, and ſpare the Town; becauſe he would tye up his Bowels effectually from being touched by the force of his words, he Swore beforehand, that he would not be prevailed upon to do, what *Anaximenes* was coming to requeſt of him: The Orator being

informed what sort of Oath he had bound himself by, took measures with him accordingly, and instead of intreating him to lay aside his Vengeance, he requested that he would by all means execute Desolation upon the Place. Now, having so fair an Opportunity as this given him, to forbear the Barbarity he was bent upon, and at the same time, to keep the express words of his Oath, who can blame *Alexander*, or who would accuse *Aurelian*, for chusing, in mercy, to stand to the saving letter, rather than the devouring intention of what their words bound them to?

Now, I might thrust this case aside, if I would, as not properly, and strictly coming under the Consideration of Lying: For, it has been commonly said, *Mendacium non est de futuro*, a *Lye* does not respect what is *Future*, but is a falsehood about something *past*, or *present*: Indeed, if at the very instant we promise, we are conscious we shall not be *able*, or do not *intend* to perform, this is properly a Lye; because we say one thing, and think another at the same time, with intention to deceive: But if, by changing our minds afterwards, we fail of making good our words, in any thing *to come*, it lies chargable under the breach of promise. But, because I have undertook to consider the nature of Lying in the largest extent, wherein soever we may fail of being true in our words, I would answer farther,

2*dly*. That, as far as the *Breach* of our *words* may be called *Lying*, the Emperors, if they passed their words upon what, they knew, they ought not to perform, were both Guilty:

For,

For, tho' they had the luck to come off from the *intention*, by being true to the bare *letter* of what they Swore; yet our *ſincerity*, or *moral truth*, is not ſo much concerned with what ſence the *Letter* of our words may *bear*, as with what was the *real* and *inward* ſence of our own Minds in uſing them; if *that* be not true, which we *really* meant and intended by our words, it avails us very little that, by good luck, in the literal Sence of them, we are true enough: So that the beſt that can be ſaid in thoſe caſes, is, they were contented, to *be* Lyars, and pleaſed themſelves to think they did not *ſeem* Lyars. Again, It muſt be remembred,

3*dly*. That the main *Guilt* and Blame of ſuch raſh denunciations lies in *making* them; he who Swears he will do, what he knows, at the ſame time, it will be ſinful for him to do, does *ipſo facto*, make an unrighteous breach in his word; for he depoſes it upon a thing in which, he knows, it is his Duty to break it. It is a Maxim in *Morality* that, What a Man cannot *lawfully* do, he *cannot* do: So *Seneca*, *Quicquid debebam nolle, non Poſſum*: And ſo, To Swear or promiſe we will do what, we are Conſcious, we cannot *Innocently*, and therefore *morally* Speaking, cannot *poſſibly* do, is forſwearing our ſelves or Lying, at the very utterance of our Words: So that had *Herod* Swore expreſly that, to pleaſe *Herodias*, he would cut off the *Baptiſt*'s Head, he would have been forſworn in the very pronunciation of his Oath, becauſe he knew he paſſed it upon a wicked and illegal purpoſe; he had ſhew'd himſelf more penitent indeed,

but

but not more perjur'd, if he had refuſed to perform his Oath. And therefore I add farther,

Fourthly, That when Men paſs their Promiſes for illegal and wicked Purpoſes, it is their duty to repent, and forbear, without more ado; without ſeeking little *fetches* and ſhifts, to ſave them harmleſs of their Words, which, when they are ever ſo luckily thought on, will never ſerve them, in the leaſt, to mend the matter: For the Reaſon they are to go upon in this Caſe is, That when Men have ſo raſhly and unrighteouſly bound themſelves, that to ſave their Word, they muſt do a much greater Wickedneſs than the breach of it would be, they ought to chuſe the leaſt Sin of the two; and rather be content to Lye, than to Oppreſs, and Murther: In the mean while, their chooſing it as the leaſt of two Evils, muſt not preſently be ſuppos'd to make it no Evil at all.

* I know, a very Great and Judicious Man has advanced a colourable Notion, to diſengage, and *ſet free* all, even God himſelf, from the *tye* of thoſe Words which are paſſed, how poſitively and unconditionally ſoever, in the way of *Threatning*; making it no breach of Truth or Veracity, tho' ſuch Words ſhould never be put in Execution: He goes upon this Suppoſition, which, Iam ſure, I cannot give you in better than his own Words; ſays he,------*He that threatens, keeps the right of*

* *Arch Biſhop* Tillotſon's *Sermon on* Mat. xxv. v. 46.

of puniſhing in his own Hands, and is not oblig'd to execute what he hath threatned, any further than the Reaſons and ends of Government do require; and he may, without any injury to the Party threatned, remit and abate as much as he pleaſeth of the Puniſhment that he hath threatned: and becauſe, in ſo doing, he is not worſe *but* better *than his Word, no body can find Fault, or complain of any wrong or injuſtice thereby done to him.* Now to all this it is readily granted, that there is no injuſtice done to the Party threatned but what he will freely forgive, if it be not executed: Yet whether, in reſpect to the Party ſo poſitively and unconditionally Threatning, and not Fullfilling, ſome mutability, failure, and untruth be not imputable, from the Diſagreement between his Words and his Deeds; * Whether *it would not be any Impeachment of God's Truth and Faithfulneſs, any more than it is eſteem'd among Men a piece of Falſhood, not to do what they have threatned*; Whether, it will magnifie the *Juſtice*, nay the Goodneſs of God, that incorrigible Reprobates ſhould have a Conſtruction in their Favour, for eſcaping, at the laſt, under the ſame impunity with the Righteous; In a word, whether that may properly be called being *better than our Word*, which, in the propriety of our Language, is, not being *as good as our Word*; I ſay, how far theſe Notions may hold, might well have deſerv'd a Second Thought, and a more deliberate Animadverſion.

* Ibid.

madverſion. And tho' I could not eaſily forgive my ſelf the Preſumption of Oppoſing what was the Genuine Senſe of that marvellous Man, yet, I muſt confeſs, this *Hypotheſis*, eſpecially in the Place and Argument where he uſed it, is almoſt the only thing I ſtick at in all his Writings: And I ſtick at it with the greater Confidence, becauſe I find the ſame Author, afterward, when he ſet himſelf to conſider God's Attributes more diſtinctly and throughly, to have been of another Mind: For, in his Sermon upon the *Truth of God*, he thus Affirms, * "If "thou continueſt Impenitent, however he "may defer the Execution of *Temporal* Evils, "his *Truth* and *Veracity* is concern'd to in- "flict *Eternal* Puniſhments upon thee; for, "*He hath ſworn, in his Wrath, that ſuch* "*ſhall not enter into his Reſt.* But more of this hereafter, when I ſhall have Occaſion to account for God's *Veracity* in his *Word*. At preſent 'tis time I remember that I have been upon a Digreſſion.

2. To miſlead and deceive any one by an *Equivocation*, is, to all intents and purpoſes, to *Lye*: By an Equivocation is meant, ſuch an ambiguous and doubtful kind of Expreſſion, as is contriv'd that it may be taken two ways, in one of which it may be true, but in the other it will be falſe; like a changeable Silk, which, when turn'd to different Lights, appears of different Colours: As if, for Example,

* Vol. 6. pub. by Bark. p. 361.

ample, a perfidious States-Man, who meditated the ruin of his Maſter, ſhould ſecretly inveigle him with this Advice, That ſuch a certain ſet of Miniſtry would infallibly *do the King's Buſineſs:* This we know will bear two very different Meanings, for to *do another's Buſineſs*, may ſignifie to ſerve him with skill, and diligence, and ſucceſs; or *to do a Man's buſineſs for him*, as we have turn'd the Phraſe, may ſignifie to *undo* him: In the former Sence the States-Man is conſcious his Propoſal muſt needs prove Falſe, but in the latter in all likelihood too true. This is the nature of an *Equivocation:* Now all that can be ſaid to juſtifie it from Lying is this, That take it one way, and it is truly what the *Equivocator* means, and if he pleaſes he can ſay he intended to be ſo underſtood.

Now I confeſs it is all in this Caſe according as a Man intends: If therefore any one ſhall happen to drop an equivocal Expreſſion unawares, and without Deſign, and another ſhall take him wrong, this is abſolutely clear of Lying; it has neither the material nor formal nature of that Sin in it; for what he ſaid, howſoever doubtful by accident, was, as he intended it, his true Sence and Meaning, and he had no deſign that any one ſhould be deceiv'd by it: Nay farther, a Man may upon ſome ſpecial Occaſions, purpoſely make uſe of an Equivocation, and yet be innocent: I mean, when he ſhall be ſo far from *intending to deceive* another by it, that it ſhall appear before he leaves off, his Deſign was to inculcate ſome good Inſtruction deliver'd in the Ambiguity; and then if he immediately explain

explain the right Sence and Truth of his Words, ſo that the Perſon go not away with the Miſtake, there is no Prevarication or Harm in all this; and that there is not I ſhall evidently ſhew from an Inſtance in our Saviour himſelf; in *John* xi, *v.* 11. he has this Expreſſion to his Diſciples-------*Our Friend Lazarus* ſleepeth, *but I go that I may* awake *him out of* ſleep: By this it ſeems *they thought he had ſpoken of taking of reſt in ſleep*; and 'tis like he intended that for the preſent inſtant they ſhould ſo miſtake him; accordingly they anſwer him, *Lord if he* ſleep *he ſhall do well:* They could ſee no ſuch Neceſſity of his going to awake him out of ſleep, if that were all; *howbeit Jeſus ſpake* (all the while) *of his Death*; but by expreſſing it at firſt by the word ſleep, he meant to inſinuate that the Dead are not actually deſtroy'd quite out of Being, but only in the Condition of Men that are gone to reſt; and *to the intent that they might believe* this he would go with them and awake him out of his Grave, with the ſame Eaſe, and in the ſame Manner, as if he were awaking a Man that lay ſleeping upon his Bed: And having for the Preſent amus'd them with that great and ſtupendious Doctrine, from the uſe of this *Equivocation*, or rather this known and proper *Allegory* of expreſſing Death by Sleep, to clear his Sincerity at laſt in the uſe of ſuch ambiguous Speech, he takes care before he left off Speaking upon that Subject, to give them a right and true Information in what ſtate their Friend was; *then ſaid Jeſus unto them plainly, Lazarus is Dead.* Much the ſame Account might here be given

of

of another equivocal Expreſſion our Lord took Occaſion to uſe, *John* ii. 19. *Deſtroy this Temple, and in three Days I will raiſe it up:* Which tho' it look'd, and for the preſent they underſtood, as if he had ſpoke of the *Great Temple* of *Jeruſalem*, whoſe Statelineſs and Beauty they were then Viewing, yet he meant it in Reality of the *Temple* of his Body: And he took that Opportunity to give them a Propheſy, which they ſhould hereafter call to mind, that three Days after the *Jews* ſhould deſtroy his Body, he himſelf would raiſe it again from the Dead: And it ſeems when, after the whole was fullfill'd, the Diſciples came to reflect upon it, it gave them great Satisfaction, of which the Text makes immediate mention; *when therefore he was riſen from the Dead, his Diſciples remembred that he had ſaid this unto them, and they believed the Scripture, and the Word which Jeſus had ſaid.* But I ſhall have Occaſion to mention this Inſtance over again hereafter. In the meant time ſuch equivocating, or more properly allegorizing as this, which is not intended to deceive, but rather to inſtruct, and to Propheſy, is far enough from partaking of the nature of Lying; and herein that Rule of St. *Auſtin* is very juſt and applicable, * *Ream Linguam non facit niſi rea Mens*, it muſt be guilt in the Mind that makes a Guilty Tongue.

That ſort of *Equivocating* therefore which I would bring in for Lying, is when Men project

* Serm. 28.

project and contrive to be doubtful and double Tongu'd, on purpoſe to miſguide and deceive the Perſon they ſpeak to; deſiring and watching that he ſhould take their wrong Sence, and be impos'd upon by it, which is therefore wilfully ſet foremoſt, and given under the moſt natural and obvious Signification of their Words, ſo that if he underſtand them in the meaning that will be ſure to come readieſt and firſt into his Mind, then he is deluded and enſnar'd; and if he be not, they are diſappointed. Take an Inſtance of this kind of dealing in the *Locrians*, * mention'd by *Polybius*; they privately put the *heads* of Onions upon their Shoulders, and *earth* within their Shooes, and then ſtruck a League with the *Sicilians*, and ſwore they would continue faſt Friends with them, as long as ever their *Heads* remain'd on their Shoulders, and while the *Earth* they ſtood upon bore them: Now thoſe *Heads* they had put upon their Shoulders, and that *Earth* they ſtood upon in their Shooes, they caſt away immediately; and then the firſt favourable Opportunity they fell upon the Men of *Sicily* barbarouſly; and being upbraided with breach of Faith, they proteſted they had obſerv'd the Tenour of their League very ſacredly. † *F. Labeo* miſtook wretched Equivocation for good Conduct, when he valued himſelf upon dividing the Fleet; He ratified with *Antiochus*, that one half ſhould ſtill remain to the *Romans*; but in order to render the Ships abſolutely

* L. 12. † Val Max. *l.* 7. *c.* 3.

lutely uſeleſs to them, he caus'd them to be all Sawn aſunder, and then very gravely deſir'd them to chooſe which *Moiety* they pleas'd. The *Saw* puts me in mind of a more modern Inſtance; one might Swear 'twas modern from the Strangeneſs of the Barbarity: When *Sultan Mahomet* took *Chalcis* the Metropolis of *Negropont*, he Capitulated with the Governour, the Valiant *Erizzo*, that upon Condition he Surrender'd he ſhould ſave his *Head*; and yet he no ſooner had him in his Power, but he order'd him to be *Sawn* off directly in the *Middle*; alledging that in ſo doing he had nicely kept his Faith; for, ſaid he, tho' I gave him his *Head* by Articles, yet it does not follow from thence, that I gave him downward to the *Waſt*. The *Turks* ſeem to have had a conſciencious regard for a *ſaving* Equivocation, eſpecially at a *dead lift*: For tho' *Sultan Solyman* Swore he would never be the Death of *Vizier Ibraim* as long as he *liv'd*, yet for all that he made no ſcruple to diſpatch him ſoon after; only for his Oath ſake, he gave Orders to have him ſtrangled at a time when he himſelf ſhould be faſt *aſleep*: Now, ſaid he, when I am once faſt *aſleep*, I am in effect no longer *living*, *ſleep* being indeed a ſort of *Death*. It was by juſt ſuch another Pun upon the ſame Word, that ſome *Romans* pretended to juſtifie their Murthering the King of *Perſia*, after they had engag'd their Faith to the Gods of *Samothrace* not to take away his Life; they ſlew him while he was *aſleep*; now, ſay they, a Man that's *dead aſleep* is not in the Condition of a *living Man*, and

ſo

ſo, from one in that State we can hardly be ſaid to take away *Life*; of this barbarous unſincerity *Mithridates* complains, in a Letter of his among the Fragments of *Saluſt.* All Hiſtories ſwarm with paſſages of this kind; Human Societies are all Canker'd with Equivocations, the Converſe of the World is little elſe.

Now I do not ſo much wonder that degenerate Men ſhould be diſpoſed to break faith and bounds, and fall foul on one another; all I wonder at is, that they ſhould think it worth while to caſt about for ſaving themſelves by ſuch idle and vain Evaſions. Surely they cannot think it can be any ſtay at all to their Veracity and Honour! who is there that does not ſee thro' the Cheat and the Lye of Equivocating? It has all the Circumſtance and Guilt of that Sin in it: For, whatever Reſerve or Salvo we may have, under a remote and blind ſignification of our Minds, which we keep to our ſelves, yet, in that ſence we Speak and wiſh to be underſtood, we expreſs quite another thing from what we think, and with deſign to deceive the Perſon who hears us, and that brings us in for the perfection of Lying. What a ſneaking eſcape from the Lye was that contrivance of St. *Francis*? Who when the Purſuers after a Murtherer asked him if the Man came that way? No! *ſaid the Fryer*, (thruſting his hand into the Sleeve of his Habit,) he came not *here*!

An apt Imitation of old Prevaricating *Arius*! who Wrote his own *Heretical* Creed in a piece of Paper, and put it under his Arm, and then, at *Conſtantine*'s Command, Subſcribed

ſcribed the *Nicene* Faith: And Swore, that he believed juſt as he had Written. So ready and natural is the Tranſition, from falſe Doctrine to Lying and Equivocating! a faculty provoking enough when inoffenſively meant, but how much more, when it is our handle to ſecure any diſhoneſt or malicious End! An enſnaring Equivocation ſeems to be like an Iron made hiſſing hot at the foremoſt end; the Man who takes it from us is ſure to be Burnt; and yet if he complains of the Trick, and in indignation ſhews us the Bliſter, we look ſurprized, and cry out *it can never be! 'tis impoſſible! the Iron is quite cold:* And for proof, to appeaſe him, we preſently put it into his hand at the other end.

3. Of the ſame kind are, what we call, *Mental Reſervations*; they are Lyes too, but in the manner of deceiving incomparably more abſurd and Scandalous: So Scandalous, that the Church of *Rome* at laſt grew aſhamed of them: Inſomuch that Pope *Innocent* XIth publiſhed a *Bull* to cry them down (amongſt ſixty five Immoral, and Infamous *Tenents* of the *Jeſuits*) from *paſſing currently* any longer; which proved ſuch an inſupportable diſappointment to many on that ſide, who before had *dealt* largely in expreſſions of that *Coin*, that they almoſt became *Bankrupt* in the *demands* of Speech; and their Caſuiſts had work enough to anſwer all the difficulties and ſcruples the People were under, how they ſhould, for the future, ſerve their juſt occaons in the concealment of their Minds.

Now

Now the manner of a *Mental Reſervation* is this; when a Man has no mind to ſpeak out ſincerely, and yet is oblig'd to ſay ſomething, he minces the truth in pieces, ſome part of it he throws out, the reſt he keeps to himſelf; that which he ſpeaks out ſhall either be falſe, or at leaſt quite remote and foreign to what he thinks: That which he *reſerves* in his Mind, from whence it is call'd a *Mental Reſervation*, is kept back on purpoſe to bring him off harmleſs, in caſe his own Conſcience, or any one elſe, ſhould charge him for Lying. For Example, ſuppoſe a Perſon ſhould be taken up, on ſuſpicion of being a Prieſt, and upon the Queſtion put, ſhould anſwer aloud thus much, *I am no Prieſt*; and in his *Mind* have this *reſerve*, *to ſpeak of*; this is the way of a *Mental Reſervation*: In which the Clauſe ſpoken out is deſigned to deceive, and the Clauſe reſerved to ſave the Lye. But ſo far is this, in reality, from ſaving him harmleſs from the Sin, that it ſerves to accuſe him to his own conſcience for being Guilty of it: Indeed it is no otherwiſe than the Confeſſion of his own Heart againſt his Lying Tongue, that what was Spoken out was a cheating falſehood, and ought either to be ſupply'd, or recall'd. But ſometimes the Sentence ſhall be Spoken out intirely falſe, and the ſecret reſerve ſhall be, that we mean it in a ſenſe directly contrary to our Expreſſion: Now this is the Groſſeſt, and Fouleſt Lying, that the Tongue and Heart can combine to be Guilty of, by the Confeſſion of both.

* Thus

* Thus when *Charlemaigne* had over-run the Territories of *Bavaria*, he demanded of the Conquered People an Oath of Fealty: The *Duke* indulged his Subjects to Swear to him, but Commanded them to do it with this reſerve in their Minds, *that they meant their Oath in a contrary ſence from what the words expreſſed: Jubebat ut aliter in mente retinerent, & ſub dolo jurarent.* Juſt as if the late King *James* had ſent a private Indulgence to his Friends in *England*, to Swear Allegiance to King *William*, to Sign the Aſſociation, and, if it ſhould come to that, to take an Oath of Abjuration, *for their own Security*; and yet had exhorted them, that while they did all this, they ſhould mean no more by it, than juſt to keep themſelves in a capacity to ſerve their old Maſter, upon the firſt favourable occaſion. Now I know not what Authority ſuch an Inſtrument might have, if iſſued out from the *See* of *Rome* to a Set of Zealous *Catholicks*, but I am perſuaded, no one who profeſſes and retains the true Principles of the Church of *England*, would think it of any force at all to ſecure and abſolve his Conſcience, tho' it came from a Prince of ever ſo undoubted a right to his Allegiance. It is a Rule that holds in all kind of Converſe, but much more in all our ſolemn and religious pledges, that if we are knowingly falſe and faithleſs in the words we ſpeak out to be heard, we are nevertheleſs ſo, nor is our caſe one jot the better, for our moſt deliberate reſervations to the contrary; for

* Du Cheſne Tome 2. p. 35.

Now the manner of a *Mental Reſervation* is this; when a Man has no mind to ſpeak out ſincerely, and yet is oblig'd to ſay ſomething, he minces the truth in pieces, ſome part of it he throws out, the reſt he keeps to himſelf; that which he ſpeaks out ſhall either be falſe, or at leaſt quite remote and foreign to what he thinks: That which he *reſerves* in his Mind, from whence it is call'd a *Mental Reſervation*, is kept back on purpoſe to bring him off harmleſs, in caſe his own Conſcience, or any one elſe, ſhould charge him for Lying. For Example, ſuppoſe a Perſon ſhould be taken up, on ſuſpicion of being a Prieſt, and upon the Queſtion put, ſhould anſwer aloud thus much, *I am no Prieſt*; and in his *Mind* have this *reſerve, to ſpeak of*; this is the way of a *Mental Reſervation:* In which the Clauſe ſpoken out is deſigned to deceive, and the Clauſe reſerved to ſave the Lye. But ſo far is this, in reality, from ſaving him harmleſs from the Sin, that it ſerves to accuſe him to his own conſcience for being Guilty of it: Indeed it is no otherwiſe than the Confeſſion of his own Heart againſt his Lying Tongue, that what was Spoken out was a cheating falſehood, and ought either to be ſupply'd, or recall'd. But ſometimes the Sentence ſhall be Spoken out intirely falſe, and the ſecret reſerve ſhall be, that we mean it in a ſenſe directly contrary to our Expreſſion: Now this is the Groſſeſt, and Fouleſt Lying, that the Tongue and Heart can combine to be Guilty of, by the Confeſſion of both.

* Thus

* Thus when *Charlemaigne* had over-run the Territories of *Bavaria*, he demanded of the Conquered People an Oath of Fealty: The *Duke* indulged his Subjects to Swear to him, but Commanded them to do it with this reſerve in their Minds, *that they meant their Oath in a contrary ſence from what the words expreſſed: Jubebat ut aliter in mente retinerent, & ſub dolo jurarent.* Juſt as if the late King *James* had ſent a private Indulgence to his Friends in *England*, to Swear Allegiance to King *William*, to Sign the Aſſociation, and, if it ſhould come to that, to take an Oath of Abjuration, *for their own Security*; and yet had exhorted them, that while they did all this, they ſhould mean no more by it, than juſt to keep themſelves in a capacity to ſerve their old Maſter, upon the firſt favourable occaſion. Now I know not what Authority ſuch an Inſtrument might have, if iſſued out from the *See* of *Rome* to a Set of Zealous *Catholicks*, but I am perſuaded, no one who profeſſes and retains the true Principles of the Church of *England*, would think it of any force at all to ſecure and abſolve his Conſcience, tho' it came from a Prince of ever ſo undoubted a right to his Allegiance. It is a Rule that holds in all kind of Converſe, but much more in all our ſolemn and religious pledges, that if we are knowingly falſe and faithleſs in the words we ſpeak out to be heard, we are nevertheleſs ſo, nor is our caſe one jot the better, for our moſt deliberate reſervations to the contrary; for

* Du Cheſne Tome 2. p. 35.

for what is any one concerned with the secrets that are with-held in anothers Mind? By the words we speak out to be heard, by those our sincerity must stand or fall; and therefore if what we express be directly false, and with fallacious intent, it is, without mincing the matter, a Lye: And our Reservation, instead of excusing or mending it, does confess, and give it up for a Lye: And the *Jesuitical* Quibler may find himself sufficiently Admonished, from Sheltring under such vain Subterfuges; For, *by thy words thou shalt be justifyed, and by thy words thou shalt be Condemned.*

4. Tho' we refrain to speak out any thing, and think by *dumb signs* to deceive and be innocent, this still partakes as much of the Guilt of Lying, as if we said the same falsehood in so many express words; for words are not more known and sure means to signifie our Minds than some bodily signs and gestures are, and therefore with a deceitful intent we may equally misperswade with both. *Quintilian*, who was a true Judge of Expression, allows that *Solæcisms* and *Lyes* may as well be told by sign and by token, as by word of Mouth: And *Aquinas* ingenuously resolves, that in Effect and Guilt it amounts to the self same thing; but when I speak here of deceiving by signs, it must be remembred that I mean chiefly such as are, by custom and institution, agreed and known to have their certain Significations, and to be proper means for the Conveyance of our Minds to one another, and by which we do pretend, and are understood, to express our Thoughts,

Thoughts, and to Converſe, and Commune with all. For, Diſcretionary geſtures are much at our Diſcretion: And while we do not make *ſigns* to be *Credited*, others may be let alone to miſtake our Motions, without being abuſed by us: For no Man has any Claim upon our Sincerity, to be let farther into the Secrets of our Minds, than we make him expect and believe he ſhall: Nor are we bound to explain, whether we have any meaning, and what our meaning is, in every Arbitrary Geſture of ours, which we do not ſo much as offer to paſs upon another, on the point of Credit and Sincerity. Not but that, by Frequent and Fallacious Practices, of Miſperſuading, and Prevaricating by Diſcretionary Signs, we ſhall draw our Honour and Integrity under juſt Suſpicion, and Treſpaſs too nearly on the Borders of Lying.

To explain my ſelf in this by a Familiar Example.----The burning of a *Watch-light*, is a Sign of no certain Signification: I may therefore uſe it on purpoſe to make *Houſe-breakers* believe that I am up, and upon my Guard, when I am not, becauſe I am free to deceive an Enemy by any Stratagem or Sign, which does not Involve me in the Breach of Truſt: I may even ſuffer a Friend to be miſtaken thereby, that I am Engag'd at my Studies, when it is not ſo; becauſe, having not given him to Underſtand that I have any ſuch meaning in my *Light*, I do not deceive him, but he deceives himſelf, if he does not gueſs aright: I may, indeed, let any Man put a wrong Conſtruction upon it, when it is not to his Detriment, without behaving my ſelf Diſingenuouſly; becauſe I m

not bound to ſet all Men right in their Miſtakes, nor to tell them what meaning I have, in every Arbitrary and Diſcretionary thing I do: Nor is it neceſſary, that a Mans Mind ſhould be Shown Naked and Open, on all Occaſions, without a Covering. Nevertheleſs, if, after I Apprehend my Neighbours take my *Candle* for a certain *Sign*, that I am plying my Lucubrations, I do, for that reaſon, continue Burning it late at Night, on purpoſe to Confirm them in their Errour, and to procure to my ſelf the undeſerved Name of cloſe Student; in this caſe, they who obſerve the Sign, and I who ſet it up, being tacitly agreed what it ſhould Signifie, my Behaviour becomes unſincere, and Borders very much upon Hypocriſie, and Lying. So again, a Clergy-man may, upon occaſion, deliver Another's Sermon, and leave the People free to think that it is, or it is not his own, as they pleaſe: For, as his Preaching it was no certain Sign or Declaration that he made it, ſo he is not Obliged to Undeceive them, ſhould they take it for granted that he did: But if he proceed to make a Practice of Crediting himſelf by another Mans Diſcourſes; and, after he knows the People do hear and receive them for his, and do Complement and Eſteem him thereon, he ſhall Connive at their miſtake, and Continue to put the Deception upon them, on purpoſe to raiſe and build up a *Falſe* Reputation upon *Borrowed* Works, this makes ſuch an alteration in the caſe, and carries ſo much Diſſimulation, Craft, and Lying in it, as is altogether unbecoming the Sacredneſs and Dignity of the Profeſſion.

But

But however, there is no doubt to be made but all kind of Signs and Geſtures and Innuendoes, which are uſed and practiſed on purpoſe for Signification, and it is generally well agreed and known what they ought to mean, do require equal Sincerity and Honour with our expreſs words; and to deceive wilfully by them, is to all intent and effect to Lye: For inſtance, if in a place where two ways meet, I ask a Perſon which of them I muſt take to bring me to ſuch a Town, and he points me directly to the wrong; I take his pointing for as plain and poſitive an anſwer, as if he ſpoke out, becauſe cuſtom has made it in that caſe equally ſignificant; and therefore, if he knowingly miſguides me thereby, he tells me as flat and perfidious a Lye, as if he directed me out of my way in ſo many ſignificant words: To miſinform by any ſuch falſe ſigns, is to expreſs our ſelves differently from what we think, and on purpoſe to deceive: And ſo, tho not one word be ſaid, it is deliberate and compleat Lying. If this were not admitted, it would be impoſſible a dumb Man ſhould ever be concern'd in the Guilt of this Sin: But as he who cannot Write is as ſtrongly bound by the teſtimony of his *Mark*, ſo he who either cannot or will not Speak, ought to be no leſs ſincere if he pretends to be underſtood by *Signs*.

And if there be any odds in the manner of the Sin, this way of Lying under ſuch wretched ſhifts and evaſions, is far enough from being the moſt excuſable; there is baſeneſs and treachery in all Lying, but ſome-

what more peculiarly ſo in Lying under pretence of being tender all the while of Truth; the friendly *kiſs* of *Judas* in the very act of Treaſon againſt his Maſter, was juſt like the ſincerity of ſuch Salvo's in Perfidious Lying: we are not fond of being deceived upon any terms; but when Mens deceits come upon us in ſuch an odd diſguiſe and medly, that we catch them in being falſe, and yet they are not falſe, and their palpable Lying is yet no Lying, it raiſes our indignation, we cannot endure that Knaves ſhould pretend to treat us as Fools. The truth of all is this, direct and obſtinate Lying is the Vice of the meaner and baſer ſort; but ſuch Caſes as I have been laſt conſidering, being of a more nice, and ſtudied, and elaborate Lying, are commonly found to be the meaſures of deep Cunning and Hypocriſie, the Practices of ſuch as are deſigning and dangerous in their Converſation, the wiles of the deceitfulleſt and worſt of Men.

5. Laſtly, I would fain venture to charge the Guilt of Lying one ſtep farther within the guards of our Minds; for we may not only commit the Sin by dumb ſigns and intimations, without opening our Mouths, but there are Caſes wherein we may be concern'd and partake in the Guilt of Lying, even without ſo much as a ſign or a word given; and this not only when by an abſolute ſilence we ſeem conſenting to one thing while we mean another; but even when we wilfully keep a Perſon in Ignorance and a wrong underſtanding of things, when he has equity in

in point of intereſt on his Side to be better inform'd and ſet right. For inſtance, if I Sell a thing which I perceive the Buyer purchaſeth for good, and I know it to be faulty; tho' I uſe not one word or geſture to make him believe 'tis good, yet if I do not tell him expreſly how far I know it to be amiſs, I am Guilty; if I purpoſely keep him deceived to his damage, it is in effect as if I actually led him into the deception; his being ignorant is but juſt as I would have it; I treat with him for that reaſon out of choice; I make the ſame advantage of it as if I had uſed indirect ſignifications to blind him; and what others bring about by Lying, I am pleaſed to find prepared to my hands already. Now if to perſuade a Man by falſe vouching to take off a ſorry Bargain be avowed Lying, why not to let a Man do it thro' his own ignorance? For we ought no more, in point of ſincerity, to connive at a Man in an Error, than to lead him into it: No one queſtions but to put a Man purpoſely out of his way by falſe directions is a pernicious Lye; now if I apprehend a Man to be out of his way, tho' he does not ask my directions, I am near as Guilty if I do not begin with him to ſet him right: This I ought to do as an indifferent Perſon, but much more if I am a Party concerned, and intereſted in his Error. I chooſe to be underſtood by this Illuſtration, becauſe I find it applyed to this very Caſe by a great Author; for thus * *Tully* makes his

* De Off. l. 3.

Diſputant argue, *To let alone a Buyer to be abominably gulled and ruined by his Ignorance, what is it elſe, but to ſuffer a Traveller to put on in a wrong Road, 'till he has run himſelf quite out of knowledge? a Crime which the* Athenians *execrated by publick and Solemn Curſes.* In ſhort, there is little difference in point of Guilt, between him that leads a Man into the Dark, and him that rejoyces to find him in the Dark, when both deſign alike to take that for an opportunity to pick his Pocket. I am ſenſible how deeply this Notion will ſtrike at the Secrets and Intrigues of Commerce: I know, Men that are nice and touchy of their Honour, do make no ſcruple to act by contrary meaſures: *Caveat Emptor* is the word, and to turn ſuch opportunities to account, paſſes for principal ingenuities in the way of dealing. Which might, perhaps, occaſion the *Son of Syrach* to ſay, that *A Merchant ſhall hardly keep himſelf from doing Wrong.*

And I muſt own, it makes ſome alteration, when Men will depend, and bargain altogether upon their own Judgements; for this puts *Dealers* in the Condition of *Rivals*, who do not profeſs to place much Confidence in one another, but each to reſpect and conſult his own Advantage, and to treat upon the beſt Terms he can: And where mutual reliance is in a manner ſet aſide, and Men truſt chiefly to their own Skill and Underſtanding, and do not look for Inſtruction, they have the leſs reaſon to complain that they have been deceived, if their own craft has miſled them. But my meaning is, that if a Perſon evidently

diſcovers,

diſcovers, or frankly owns his Ignorance, or if the defect be latent, or of ſuch a Nature, that his Judgement can be of little uſe to him in the Matter, and eſpecially, if he refers and puts himſelf upon our Honour, to be candidly dealt with; then, if we conceal from from him what he is concern'd to know, in order to make an over-valuable Advantage of his Ignorance, this ſurely is deceitful, unſincere, and very much of the Nature of injurious Lying. In all ſuch Caſes, *Tully* (who was no contemptible Caſuiſt) tho' a Heathen, lays this down for a Rule, *Neminem id agere, ut ex alterius prædetur inſcitiâ, That no Man ought in his Dealings, to prey upon anothers Ignorance:* And his Examples are pertinent to his Principle. For Inſtance,-------

" An Honeſt Trader of *Alexandria* brings " in his lading of Corn to *Rhodes*, in hopes, " thro' a preſent Scarcity there, to come to " a conſiderable Market: He knows that " there are, alſo, ſeveral other Veſſels fol- " lowing him from thence, with Cargoes of " the ſame Proviſion, and likely to come with- " in a few Days, into the ſame Port: The Queſtion then is, whether he be bound in " Conſcience to give Notice of this to the " People of *Rhodes?* or, by being Silent, to " make the moſt of his Advantage. I am thinking, what a very Puritan of a Moraliſt *Tully* muſt appear to our Men of Buſineſs, for bringing this into Queſtion! who are ſo far from ſcrupling to thrive upon private Intelligence, that they ſcarce ſtick at creating falſe News, or ſtifling the True, to turn their own Adventures to account, and raiſe

high *Premio*'s upon the riſques of others. But I am ſenſible, Trade is a different thing now, from what it was in thoſe times; and runs more upon Contention and Tricking, than fair and friendly Commerce; and therefore, muſt not be try'd by the Teſt of their ſevere Rules and Principles.

Another Caſe of his. A Man expoſes to "Sale a certain Houſe, on the ſcore of ſome "Defects and Inconveniencies in it, known "only to himſelf; it is ſituate in a peſtilent "Air, which others at the ſame time take to be "Healthy; Vermine breed in every Corner "of it, the Timber is decay'd, and the Te-"nement juſt tottering, but all this is ſtill "in the Owners Boſom only: Now the "Query is, if he keep the Purchaſer in Ig-"norance, and by that means put it off for "a great deal more than otherwiſe he could "have made of it, whether this be fairly, "or elſe deceitfully and unjuſtly done. Theſe Caſes thus intelligibly ſtated, he cauſes to be diſputed out by two Stoicks, a Maſter and his Diſciple, and they ſay, I think, the Sum of all that can be ſaid on both Sides; but in Concluſion this is *Tully*'s Judgment, That in both Caſes the Vender deals unfairly to keep the Buyer in Ignorance; for tho' every thing you keep to your ſelf is not unjuſtifiable *Concealment*, yet when you willingly ſuffer others to continue ignorant of thoſe Things, which it concerns them in point of Intereſt to know, on purpoſe that you may make a Market of them; 'tis eaſie to ſee what kind of *Concealment* this is, and what ſort of Men they

are

are who deal after that Manner: * *Certe non Aperti, non ſimplicis, non ingenui, non juſti, non viri boni; verſuti potius, obſcuri, Aſtuti, Fallacis, Malitioſi, Callidi, Veteratoris, Vafri. Surely this is not the part of an open, ſincere, ingenuous, juſt, nor good Man; but rather of a ſhuffling, dark, crafty, deceitful, ſly, ſubtile, inveterate Knave.* After, he gives us the Precedent of a Caſe much like thoſe before, wherein *Cato* the Elder was Arbitrator; and he tells us, the Subſtance of his Award was this, *Cum in venundando rem eam ſciſſet, & non pronunciaſſet, Emptori damnum præſtari oportere:* "That ſince the Vender knew "the Inconvenience that attended what he "Sold, and did not tell the Purchaſer of it, "he ſhould make good his Damage. And in general, the *Cenſor* Eſtabliſh'd this to be a ſtanding Rule for fair and upright Dealing, *Notum eſſe emptori vitium quod noſcet venditor*; "That the Buyer ought to be made "acquainted with every thing the Seller "knows amiſs in what is dealt for. If theſe are falſe Doctrines, let that great *Roman* be reſponſible for them; nevertheleſs, I ſhould be ſorry to think that Chriſtians ſhould come ſhort of Heathens in their Notions of Morality.

Well, but granting it to be a ſort of Injuſtice, to keep Men in Ignorance for our own unreaſonable Gain, yet after all, how does this come in for Lying? I anſwer, for Reaſons like theſe: For, in the firſt place, if I do not

* Ibid.

not expreſly tell another the thing I Sell is damnified or defective, and I am ſatisfied he does not know it is, I do, even tho' I am ſilent, imply, and make believe I think it good; my expoſing it to Sale without exception amounts to ſuch an Intimation: Now if by any means, tho' it be by ſaying and doing juſt nothing, I would fain have it believ'd a thing is good, when I know it is not, I entice another to be miſperſwaded and deceiv'd; to contribute towards which, is always the proper Buſineſs and Work of a Lye. Again, by taking a good and ſuitable Price, I confirm him in his Error; the demanding of *that* is ſomething more than bare Silence or Concealment: This is a ſignificant Sign made, and ſomething actually done on my Side, to deceive and abuſe him: To take a good Price for a bad Bargain, is inſtead of an expreſs Warrant or Declaration that I think it good; and if I do any thing wilfully, that ſhall ſerve for a proper Intimation, to make another believe a thing is, what I know it is not, I come up toward the Guilt of compleat Lying. Farther, the Complaints and Remonſtrances of the Buyer, when he has found me out, will ſoon come upon me, and upbraid me to my Face, that I have dealt unſincerely and falſely, and in effect like a Lyar; and all Men, who are indifferently concern'd, will ſtand by and ſecond him. Again, Courts of Equity will relieve a Man in ſuch Caſes, as much as if expreſs Overtures had been made to lead him into the Cheat. It was not for nothing therefore that *Demoſthenes* takes Notice, that the

Law

Law againſt Lying was publickly ſpread open in the *Athenian* Market-place: * [Κατὰ τὴν ἀγορὰν ἀψευδεῖν νόμον γεγράφθαι,] and if any Man offer'd any thing diſhonourable in Dealing, he was Convicted by the tenor of that Statute; intimating, that all ſuch deceitful and unfair Trading did very much border upon Lying: † Upon which *Grotius* Critically Remarks, that *there* a Lye is of that large Extent and Acceptation, [*ut etiam obſcuram locutionem includat*] that it includes all *obſcure* or *unaudible* Speaking; and therefore alſo all fraudulent Silence and Concealment: And all Great Men, who have pretended to Exactneſs in their Notions of Virtue and Honour, have been no leſs ſcrupulous of deceiving by their Silence, than by expreſs Words: To which purpoſe *my Lord Clarendon* does this Juſtice, to a noble and excellent Example of unblemiſh'd Integrity, *He could as eaſily have given himſelf leave to ſteal, as to diſſemble, or to ſuffer any Man to think that he would do any thing which he reſolved not to do; which he thought a more Miſchievous kind of Lying, than a poſitive averring what could be moſt eaſily contradicted.* And in the Senſe of the Civil Law it amounts to a Lye, for a Man to take upon him that Character and Credit, which in his way of Dealing he does not deſign to act up to; it is call'd by *Gregory*, *A Lye in Fact:* And * *Tully obſerves*, that tho' the Civil Law cannot pretend to provide expreſly againſt all Con-

---

* Orat. adv. Lept. † De Jur. P. & P. l. 3, c. 10. * Syntag. Jur. l. 39. c. 15. De Off. l. 3.

Concealments and Frauds of this kind, yet as many as it can provide againſt it does; and then he fetches about this vehement ſtroke of Satyr, at ſuch as actually make uſe of vain and lying Words to deceive: *Quod ſi vituperandi ſunt qui reticuerunt, quid de ijs exiſtimandum eſt, qui orationis vanitatem adhibuerunt?* "If they are ſo much to blame, who "deceive by being only Silent, what ſhall "we think of thoſe Men, who make uſe of a "world of ſmooth and wheedling Lyes in or-"der to it?

Thus I have endeavour'd to unravel this Sin of Lying out of all its intricate Mazes and Intanglements: But after all, I muſt confeſs, the Temptations and Inducements, the Ways and Means and Ends for it are ſo various and numberleſs, that it is beyond the meaſures of Diſcourſe to comprehend it within certain Bounds; and tho' I have attempted to mark out ſome Diſtinctions, to ſhew when we are not and when we are Guilty; yet after all, if I were to direct to one ſingle Principle, by which we ſhould Judge for our ſelves, I ſhould referr every Man to the impartial Dictates of his own Conſcience; for tho' we may lay ſtreſs upon Equivocating and Shifting, to ſupport our Credit from ſinking under the Cenſures of the World, yet it cannot be a ſufficient Stay to defend us againſt the Accuſations of our own Breaſt: We are often ſenſible enough of our Guilt within, when we will not yield it manifeſt to the Judgments of other Men: and if we would but allow our Conſciences due Animadverſion,

and

and a fair Hearing, it ſhould ſcarcely be ever poſſible for us to be guilty of a Lye, tho' under never ſo plauſible a Pretence or Form, but they would give us a very juſt and punctual Notice of it, and privately tell us, *that's a Lye.* But for a Man to think of laying down infallible Rules, that ſhall determine every thing that may be made Caſuiſtical upon this Subject, would be a very vain and endleſs Undertaking. A Lye is ſuch an indefinite, and mutable, and verſatile turn of Speech, convertible and plyant to ſo many Purpoſes, transformable into ſo many Shapes, flexible to ſo many Ends, ſo ready and willing and apt for all Buſineſs, comes on under ſo many different Diſguiſes, and is brought off again by ſo many cunning Fetches and Evaſions, ſo diligent and daring to do miſchief, and ſo ſlippery and flitting a thing to catch hold of, that it will not endure to ſtand ſtated and fix'd to any juſt Diſtinctions: you may as well pretend to graſp the Solidity of the Air, to faſten Chains upon a Fairy, or to deſcribe one conſtant Figure to an empty and whiffling Cloud.

To follow the Fantaſtical Thing, a little, in a *Perſonal* View; ſometimes it confidently ſtares a Man in the Face, by and by 'tis whiſpering behind his Back, another while it ſhall addreſs to one Man directly, but intend to take Effect upon the *Stander-by:* Sometimes it ſallies out in plain and glaring Terms, and is a Lye in ſo many Words; again it ſhall affect to be obſcur'd in Duſk and Twilight, and is as dim and doubtful as an Oracle: Often it will out-face you in poſitive and bold Aſſertions;

Aſſertions; At other times it ſhall get round, and ſteal in upon you, in ſneaking Circumlocutions, in Equivocations, and Quibbles, and broken Sentences, and is ſo minced and chopt between the Teeth, that it ſhall hang half out of the Mouth, and half within: Now and then you ſhall have it ſo delicately and nicely Spun, that it ſhall eſcape all vulgar Notice, and by that Token you know it to be a Lye of *Conſideration*; But, ordinarily Speaking, ſo courſe and clumſey, that you may plainly *feel* the Falſhood to be *Ruſtick*, and *Mechanical*. Sometimes it is full and overflowing with ſmooth and fair Words, and comes uſher'd out with high and ſolemn Proteſtations; (a ſure ſign of Suſpecting its own Credit!) At other times it makes leſs ado, but does more Buſineſs, eſpecially when it keeps ſullenly coucht, and *ſtiffen'd* within thoſe two *ſtarcht* Monoſyllables, Yea, and Nay. Often it ſhall deceive you by a ſignificant Sign, by a ſly Intimation, by a falſe nod of the Head, or the twinkle of a deceitful Eye; but, upon ſome Occaſions, it will not be at the trouble of a Breath, or a Sign, but will ſilently *concent* you into the Miſtake, of your own Accord.

Various and Numberleſs are the uſes and ends of this buſy Faculty. 'Tis Officious and Handy to every Purpoſe, beſides that of ſimple Truth, and open Force. It compleatly Qualifies for high Ceremony and Complaiſance, for Flattering and Inveigling with the Weak and Vain, for Over-reaching the Wiſe and Wary, and for Shufling and Dodging from the Mighty. It is converſant in all the.

the *Forms* and *Modes* of the topmoſt Rank. It is the Language of States-Men, the Familiar Addreſs of Men in Characters, and your never failing *Friend at Court*. From Quality downward, it is dextrous thro' all degrees of Buſineſs, as a Man's right Hand. It hovers like an Enchantment, about Weights, and Marks, and Meaſures, and is, thro' the Corruption of Times, become in a manner Neceſſary to Oblige, and to diſpatch. Few Bargains are drove, to Satisfaction on either Side, without it. *For as a Nail ſticketh faſt between the Joynings of the Stones, ſo doth the Lye ſtick cloſe between Buying and Selling.* Even with *Idlers* it finds a full Employment, and takes an endleſs Latitude in all Converſation. It is the banter of the Gay and Humorous, the Cenſures of the Preciſe and Proud, and the Scandals of the Malicious. It is throughly read in *Travels*, and Hiſtories, but eſpecially, in all *Secret Hiſtories*. It is the Poets Muſe, the Painter's Varniſh, the Gilt and Counterfeit of baſe Coin, and that affected Red and White that often Blooms out freſh upon a withered Beauty. But there is no end of Tracing this unaccountable Evil, thro' all its *Workings* and *Mazes*. It Embarks in all Adventures, Trims to all Parties, Transforms to all Shapes, changes to all Colours and Complexions; And, being an utter Stranger to Principle or Conſcience, never Flinches or Relents at any Thing.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Whether it be Lawful in any Caſe, or upon any Occaſion or Pretence whatſoever to Lye.

SECT. I.

Some Reflections upon thoſe Authors, who have allow'd of Lying in ſome Caſes.

II. *I Come now to Enquire, whether it may be Lawful in any Caſe, or upon any Pretence whatſoever to tell a Lye? And I ſhall ſhew for what good Reaſons I am of Opinion it is not.*

Nevertheleſs this muſt be allow'd a Queſtion: many Learned Men, both Ancient and Modern, have taken the contrary Side; and therefore, we may be ſure, not without conſiderable Difficulties objected, great appearance of Reaſon given, and very much argued and ſaid againſt the part I have taken: my Reſolution is to make my way thro' as directly as I can; and in order to it I ſhall turn as little aſide as poſſible after the different Sentiments and Oppoſitions of other Men; my Deſign being not to hold you amus'd with a Confutation of ſuch of them as may be falſe, but to give the plaineſt and cleareſt Evidence I can of that Opinion which I conceive to be true; however, 'twill be neceſſary

ceſſary to premiſe a juſt ſtate of the Controverſie, that it may be known wherein and upon what grounds Men have been divided, and how far they have been all agreed; and by this means we ſhall be the more diſtinct and certain what 'tis we pretend to maintain, when we come to a Determination in our own Judgments.

I have ſhew'd already, that *the Nature and Guilt of compleat and finiſh'd Lying, conſiſts in expreſſing our ſelves differently from what we think, on purpoſe to deceive.* Now the common method of Learned Men is to reduce all ſorts of Lying under theſe three Heads, *Jocular, Officious*, and *Pernicious*; the Jocular or Ludicrous Lye is told only in Jeſt, and for Merriment; an Officious Lye is what we tell with a good and charitable Deſign; a Pernicious Lye is what we make uſe of for Knavery and Miſchief; but there is yet a fourth ſort of Lying which I find mentioned by *Ariſtotle*, and I doubt there is too much room for it; and it is when, from an inveterate Habit, Men Lye out of meer luſt to the Sin; having not ſo much as a Jeſt, much leſs any good or evil end to ſerve in it; but a conſtant Itching and Inclination to make other Men believe the Lord knows what: ſuch a one the Philoſopher calls * ὁ μὲν Ψεύδει αὐτῷ χαίρων, *one who finds Pleaſure and Enjoyment in the very Lye it ſelf.* And the Poet *Steſicorus*, in a Letter to the Tyrant *Phalaris*, deſcribes the Scoundrel *Cophron*, a pertinent Example of

* Ariſt. Eth. *l.* 4. *c.* 13.

of this Character. " His averſion for Truth " is ſo Remarkable, that, if ſpeaking it would " ſave his Money, which he loves as his Life, " he would rather looſe *that*, than the Plea- " ſure of Lying: Some tell Lyes for Excuſe " or Conveniency, but he does it out of pure " Wantonneſs. Now I believe I may venture to ſet aſide the two laſt ſorts of Lying, namely when it is to do wrong, or out of pure Luſt to the Sin, by conſent of all Parties; for I do not remember any Caſuiſt ſo much addicted to controvert, as to juſtifie that 'twas allowable to Lye out of Miſchief, or out of pure luſt to the Lye it ſelf, and only for Lying ſake. *David* ſeldom forgets this Circumſtance, in Men that are perfectly Vile and Infamous; *Their Delight is in Lyes:* And again, *Thou loveſt Evil more than Good, and Lying rather than Truth.*

What Allowances ſome have made, have been to the two former Caſes, to wit, when we lye only to make Mirth, or elſe to do good, and are careful at the ſame time to do no Man any Wrong; and the main Reaſon they ſeem to go by is this, that where no harm or inconvenience ariſes, but rather good is done, what neceſſity is there to impute Evil? as if the guilt of Lying did not conſiſt ſo much in *expreſſing our ſelves fallaciouſly, in Oppoſition to our own Minds*, as in the accidental Ends and Conſequences we may drive at in ſo doing; the contrary whereof I hope to make appear, at leaſt, very probable, by and by: In the mean while, I ſhall not detain my ſelf upon a particular Examination of every thing which Learned Men have offer'd

on

on that ſide, but ſhall content my ſelf with making two or three general reflections how the Caſe ſtands with them. And,

1*ſt.* I obſerve they are not agreed among themſelves in their account and notion of a Lye; one making it to conſiſt in the bare telling of a wilful Untruth; another in the Untruth, and the intent of deceiving joined together: Others will have it conſiſt only in deceiving Men about thoſe Truths which they have a right to in point of equity: Others will have the notion of Lying extend only to Perſons Civiliz'd, and under the Laws of Society and Government; and ſo, when the *Spaniards* forced their way upon *America*, they were not engaged to act toward the Natives with any regard to ſincerity; they might tell them as many *Untruths* as they pleas'd, but they could not tell them *Lyes*. Others, of which Number the Great *Lock*, will have it, That *Truth, and keeping of Faith, belongs to Men as Men, and not as Members of Society:* And there are thoſe who will not allow an Untruth to be properly a Lye, unleſs it be told for ſome unrighteous end and purpoſe. Now by this confus'd and uncertain account of the nature of a Lye, it is impoſſible they ſhould be clearly and diſtinctly agreed in their Judgments about the lawfulneſs or unlawfulneſs of it. So far from it, that by this means thoſe who allow the largeſt latitude to it, ſeem to be the moſt peremptory Men in condemning it. And for inſtance, I would only mention *Puffendorff*; no Writer that I know of, gives freer ſcope and indulgence

gence to this Talent; and yet if you ask his resolution of the Question in hand, he shall answer you in these absolute and decisive words; * *Quod autem omne mendacium, proprie dictum, turpe sit, manifestum est:* i. e. "It is "very clear and evident that every Lye, "properly so call'd, is sinful. This is indeed my opinion; and the very utmost I would contend for; but then look back, and see what he means by a Lye *properly so call'd*, and this puts all in confusion again; † *proprie mentiri non dicitur, nisi qui dolo malo & destinatâ ex malitiâ, alteri diversa ab animi sui sententiâ profert, eo fine, ut isti noceat, aut vanâ spe eidem illudat:* It seems a Man is not properly speaking, Guilty of a Lye, but when he utters expressions to another quite different from the sense of his own mind, with *a knavish intent*, with *propense malice*, and in order to *injure* the Man he speaks to, or at least to cheat him with a *vain hope and expectation.* Now to do any thing knavishly, with propense Malice, or in order to injure or impose upon another, is sufficiently Sinful without more ado; so that put those two passages together, and Lying is very little discouraged by that Author's Pen; for by this account the jocular and the officious Lye, the only two sorts of it that admit of dispute, have perfectly escaped his displeasure: Indeed in his Opinion they are not Lying. Now when Men disagree and vary about the Nature of that upon which they

* De Jur. l. 4. P. 318. † P. 317.

they would ſpend their Judgments, 'tis an Omen they are like to determine at ſome uncertainty; when they are not of the ſame mind what a thing is, they are unlikely to be well reſolv'd about the lawfulneſs of it; being different in their *Premiſes*, their Reaſons muſt be different and precarious, that bring them to one common Concluſion.

2. I obſerve they are very much divided among themſelves, as to thoſe particular Caſes wherein they would connive at Lying: ſome have thought Men may innocently vary from the truth but, only, in the way of merriment; others, who allow we may Lye in good earneſt to ſerve the ends of Righteouſneſs and Charity, are yet far enough from being agreed upon the ſame reſpects and conditions; for ſome ſcruple at it ſtill, unleſs the good we propoſe by it, be of extraordinary emergency; and there are thoſe who ſpecifie it muſt be a publick, and not a private good: Others who indulge it in private Caſes, ſtill ſay, they muſt be very weighty and preſſing; ſome not under the ſaving a Man's Life, others not unleſs you can propoſe to do good to a Man's Soul. But ſome great Men have thought it fooliſh to ſtand mincing and ſcrupling out their Minds into ſuch nice diſtinctions, and have roundly affirm'd upon the general, that, in every reſpect, where you may do good by a Lye, and do no miſchief, there you may ſafely venture; and if any Hypotheſis on that ſide would ſtand, in my Opinion, this is the likelieſt, and moſt conſiſtent. But now, where Men are ſo miſera-

bly

bly divided, in explaining themselves about the same Point, 'tis a sign they are got on the wrong side of the Question; since they cannot agree among themselves in what particular Cases to indulge it, 'tis natural enough to suspect from thence that it ought to be indulg'd in none.

3. 'Tis farther observable, that when they do venture out for some allowances, their Opinions come from them with great tenderness and caution; one saith, it must be very seldom, if ever, that you let a Lye escape from you, tho' out of a good intent, for fear of drawing it into Custom: Another says, you are bound in Conscience to think of all other expedients first, Lying must be your last refuge; which is much the same thing as to say, 'tis adviseable to try all fair means, before you make use of foul: Another confesses ingenuously that, after all, he does not see how we can venture *to do evil that good may come:* I confess nor I neither. But why all this Scrupling and Hesitation? There is no fear of Speaking out plainly where a thing is lawful and honourable: But when Men draw back thus from an Opinion which they would fain advance, and provide for it with so much wariness and conditioning, it seems as if they mistrusted what they were doing; and therefore some, the School-men, who found it a vain thing to strive thus against Nature, have pleaded Indulgence for prevaricating a little, on Innocent and good occasions, under this pretence, that it is at most, if at all, but a very light and venial Sin: But when once we come to be conscious a thing

is

is at all ſinful, our wilful and deliberate committing it, will alter the ſize of a Sin ſtrangely.

4. Laſtly, one thing is farther obſervable in the Men on that ſide: They cannot forbear dropping Sentences in our way, by which we are left to judge how much more they thought it would become our Religion and our Honour, that we keep conſtantly ſteady and ſincere to truth; and for this I ſhall pitch upon one or two of the Chiefeſt. *Crellius* is pretty favourable in his allowance of Lying, as in caſe of neceſſity, to ſerve a Friend, or now and then to ſerve our ſelves; and yet he confeſſes, to have recourſe to it more than ſeldom is vicious: Nay when, according to his conſtant method of ſtating Vertue in the middle between two extreams of Vice, he places Truth between Lying on the one hand, and exceſſive ſimplicity on the other; he readily ſets the mark of Vice upon all Treſpaſſes on the ſide of Lying, but Errors on the contrary extream, which in other Caſes he ſeldom ſpares, he Speaks of here with great tenderneſs and charity. * *Nimia in dicendo ſimplicitas, ſive ſinceritas, imprudentiam potius quam improbitatem arguit*; *extream ſincerity in Speaking, argues imprudence rather than improbity*; which is as much as to ſay, that a Man of that Character, if he be not as ſubtile as another, he will be ſure to be Honeſter.

---

* Eth. Ariſt. par. 2. c. 21.

neſter. * *Grotius* gives a larger latitude to the Vice than *Crellius*; and yet methinks when he ſays it is [*ob eximiam quandam animi celſitudinem*] owing to a *ſingular greatneſs or majeſty of mind*, that ſome have declar'd abſolutely even againſt the lighteſt kind of Lying; that expreſſion gives no diſadvantage to ſuch a Principle; a Principle which he farther favours with this conceſſion, that it ought to be ſo much the more eſpecially regarded and maintained by Chriſtians, becauſe they are not only commanded in the Goſpel to be endued with a *Dove-like ſimplicity*, but to avoid every fooliſh and *idle word*, and they have that true *Iſraelite* pointed out to them for Example, *in whom is no guile*. And *Puffendorf*, who has contrived as much indulgence for Lying, as any Author of Note that I have met with, does yet, when he comes to meaſure what ſort of Men we ought to be according to the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, take up and dictate after another manner; for (ſaith he) "As no Man "would be ſo impudent to blame the gravity "of an † *Epaminondas*, who maintained that "we are never to tell a Lye, no not in jeſt, "ſo it is very natural to believe that ſome "* *Atonements are ſtill due*, when a Man's "words officiouſly vary from his mind, for "his own or anothers good, tho' no one at "the ſame time be injured: And therefore it "were to be wiſhed that, according to *Ci-*"*cero*, *all Lying and Diſſembling were abſo-*"*lutely*

---

* De Jur. l. 3. c. 20. † De Jur. nat. p. 318. * Piacula, ſemper obſtringi.

" *lutely baniſhed out of Human Society*; and " for that purpoſe, that all Men had ſo " much ingenuity as not to envy the " Poſſeſſions of others, nor lay ſnares for " them, nor fraudulently abuſe their ſimpli- " city, nor make uſe of any meaſures that " are contrary to the dictates of ſound Rea- " ſon? This indeed is ſaid like a Chriſtian, like an Apoſtle! Now when Learned Men will ſtrain their ſtrength one way, and yet permit their inclinations and good wiſhes to break looſe another; when their reaſon ſhall keep labouring and tugging for Indulgence, and yet their Praiſes and Encomiums are all beſtowed upon the contrary Principle; this ſhews which part their Judgments would determine for, if they were abſolutely free: Truth is a very ſtubborn and inflexible thing, and will not endure to be kept under.

Now after ſuch Reflections as theſe, upon the Authors who have beſpoke permiſſion for Lying in particular Caſes, it is reaſonable to allow, that it is not out of ſtiffneſs, or humour, or ſingularity, that ſome have now and then been of the contrary opinion: And it muſt be ſufficient I ſhould think, to prepare you to hear, at leaſt, what may be offered to maintain it.

I ſhall therefore now repreſent for what good reaſons I am of this Perſwaſion, *That it is lawful in no Caſe, and upon no pretence whatſoever to tell a Lye*; and I go in general upon this Suppoſition for my Principle, *That Lying is intrinſically, ſimply, and abſolutely Evil*

in its own nature; and if it be ſo, as I ſhall endeavour by and by to ſhew it is, then the Caſe is very plain and clear; for, we may be ſure that no pretence whatſoever can make that allowable, which in the nature of the thing is ſinful; no Circumſtances or Accidents can alter the eſſential property of a thing; there is no diſcharging or cleanſing out defilement, when it in is the very ſubſtance of the thing to be foul: Inherent blackneſs can never be ſcoured out; that which in its ſelf is wicked, will be wicked in ſpight of any outward Conſideration whatſoever. Is Lying ſimply ſinful in the nature of it? That's enough, we can ſay no worſe of any other Sin whatſoever; and it may as well be ſuppoſed that Circumſtances may, in ſome ſpecial Caſes, make Adultery, Blaſphemy, or the hatred of God allowable. 'Tis vulgarly known and quoted, what a great Caſuiſt, no leſs than St. *Paul*, has taught to this purpoſe, when he reſented it as a *Slanderous Report* caſt upon him, that he ſhould ſay, *Let us do evil that good may come*; which was the fartheſt in the World from being his own ſence and Doctrine: And * *Tully* has ſomething very parallel to that; *relinquendane ſit honeſtas, propter utilitatis magnitudinem? Id quidem improbum eſt.* "To ſwerve "from what is honeſt, under pretence of the "great good we can do by it, is wicked; And in general, the main Principle that runs thro'

* De Off. l. 3.

thro' his Treatiſe of *Humane Duties*, and is at it were the *burthen* of the whole Book, is this, "That nothing can be good and profi-"table, but what is juſt and honourable: *Eadem utilitatis quæ honeſtatis eſt regula*; again, he calls them *res à natura copulatæ*: Which being admitted, as it ſeems it is the ſence not only of Revelation, but of Natural Reaſon, I have only this to make out, *That Lying is in its own Nature intrinſically, ſimply, and abſolutely evil*; for then you ſee it muſt of courſe be utterly diſallowable; and perhaps when the following Reaſons are impartially conſidered, this will not ſeem ſuch a ſtrange and unlikely Propoſition: I do not promiſe they ſhall all bear down directly upon it, at the very point of Demonſtration; there is room but for one at a time to do that, and if one does it, 'tis as good as if a Thouſand did, but they will I think all contribute their ſhare of ſtreſs to make the principle ſtand firm.

SECT. II.

Lying prov'd to be intrinsically, simply and absolutely Evil.

1. FIRST then, *Lying seems to be intrinsically, simply, and absolutely Evil*, because there is in it a sort of *Natural* Vice and Obliquity; the two principal parts of a Man are divided and oppos'd; they are *two* indeed, in the very worst sence; the Law in the Members declares against the Law in the Mind; and the distinction between the *outward* and the *inward* Man is become necessary; the Man *without* and the Man *within* being in two different Tales; *mentiri est contra mentem ire.* Now when a Man is *besides* his right Mind, he is reckoned Mad; therefore when he goes wilfully and deliberately in a direct opposition *against* his right Mind, methinks it is something worse. One of the Ancients called Human Voice the *Messenger* of the Mind, the *Angel* of the Understanding; but when it is purposely dispatched to give a false *Annunciation*, the Soul sends out her *good Angel* upon the *Devil's* Errand, *to go forth and be a Lying Spirit.* The Tongue and the Heart were at first exactly fitted to one another, that according as we conceive, so we should pronounce; but Lying cuts off their Communication, sets them at a misunderstanding, at a perfect disjunction; the *string* of the Tongue,

Tongue, and the *ſtring* of the Heart ought, if they are well in *tune*, to be juſt in *uniſon*; if they ſtrike a *diſcord*, Nature is quite out of *harmony*, and we muſt make very ſorry *Muſick*. If our expreſſion does not point directly to our mind, our Syſtem does not go right; ſome *foul* thing muſt have fallen in, and diſturb'd the movement: and it is the ſame fundamental Error and Defect, as it would be in a Watch to keep moving on to the wrong Hour, or for the ſhadow to point contrary to the true time of the Sun. Lying was ſo inconſiſtent with the firſt and perfect ſtate of Man, that when the Devil had occaſion to have recourſe to it, he could not undertake the Cheat in any Human ſhape, but was forced to chop down into a *Serpent*, a grovling, baſe, degenerate reptile; the reverſe of upright Nature, Mans utter oppoſite and Antipathy: In a word, there can be no reaſon why Men are ſo notoriouſly given to Lying now, but becauſe our Natures, by the Fall, have been jogged out of due frame; ſo long as we kept going on in a ſtate of Innocence, we were out of a Condition to tell a Lye.

2. Lying ſeems to be *ſimply* and *eſſentially* evil, becauſe of that *moral* Obliquity and Vice in it, as it ſtands directly oppoſite to the Nature of ſincerity and truth; there all Moraliſts place it, and there it ought to ſtand. The Apoſtle has repreſented them incompatible, *no Lye is of the Truth:* And the Philoſopher does, from this utter and abſolute contrariety between them, impute evil and

guilt as simply and essentially to the one, as he does Commendation and Virtue to the other; καθ' ἄυτὸ τὸ μὲν ψεῦδος φαῦλον καὶ ψεκτὸν, τὸ δὲ ἀληθὲς καλὸν καὶ ἐπαίνετον *, *Lying is of it self sinful and abominable, just as on the contrary, Truth is righteous and praise-worthy.* Now it is not doubted but sincerity or moral Truth is intrinsically and simply good, essentially and absolutely Virtuous, insomuch that it is impossible for any one to act with regard to sincerity and truth, and not at the same time to act with Vertue annd Honour; and if so, the reason of Contraries is much the same; for then it will be altogether as impossible to deal unsincerely and tell a Lye, without the Guilt of Vice and dishonour; if the one be essentially and simply good, the other, which stands directly opposite against it, must for equal reason be simply and essentially Evil.

3. Lying misapplies and abuses one of the most useful and peculiar gifts that God has bestowed upon Human Nature; and it is, I think, impossible to do *that*, and not do Evil. Now the use of Speech was certainly such a kind of gift. For, let us imagine what an odd Creature Man must have appeared without it: We have no way to look into one anothers minds by intuition, and if every one must have kept his thoughts locked up within his own Breast, we should all have shifted

* Arist. Eth l 4. c. 1.

ſhifted up and down for our ſelves like other Salvages; we might have met in Woods and ranges, and looked wiſe and wiſt upon one another, and ſo do Apes and Monkeys; but we ſhould have had a difficult matter to have made it out to demonſtration, that we were more rational than ſome other Animals. I call Speech therefore a moſt peculiar and ſpecial gift to Man; for howſoever Brutes may conceive rationally, we meet with none of them that can talk ſo; they have not the command of their Tongues to diſpute this Privilege with us. 'Tis alſo a moſt uſeful and neceſſary gift, for being hereby enabled to impart our thoughts freely and eaſily to one another, we have come to make the moſt of what we are, to form our ſelves into Civil Societies, to unite in one common intereſt and welfare, to combine in Peace and Friendſhip; to improve alſo the condition of our Souls as well as our Bodies, to open our intellectual Faculties, to enlarge them in knowledge and wiſdom, to make our minds more liberal and intelligent, by Education, to enrich them in the Treaſures of Human Underſtanding, by a free commerce and interchange of one anothers notions and diſcoveries. In fine, to brighten and poliſh out our whole Natures to admiration; for *as Iron ſharpneth Iron, ſo doth a Man the countenance of his Friend.*

Now as Speech was ſuch a peculiar and admirable gift of God, it is reaſonable to think, the perverting and abuſing of it muſt be proportionably ſinful; and we cannot

more perverſely abuſe it than by Lying; for this is to make it ſerve for juſt the contrary end from that for which it was given: And as it holds generally true, *that the beſt things corrupted become the worſt*, ſo it is in the *corruption* of Speech; it becomes an inconvenience, a very Curſe and Plague; the occaſion of more miſchief and confuſion than any one corrupt thing in the world beſide: And we had much better of the two be without this expedient of conveying our Minds abroad, than to take an advantage by it of doing juſt the contrary; and inſtead of conveying our Minds nearer to other People, to convey them much farther off from our true Minds, than they could have been without it. 'Twas *Puffendorf*'s own reflection, and I think a very judicious one, *per abuſum linguæ homo minus fieret ſociabilis quam per ſilentium:* "By making an ill uſe of "Speech, Men may become much leſs fit "for Human Society, than if they were "altogether Dumb. In this reſpect the advantage rather lies on the ſide of Brutes, for being uncapable of diſcourſe, they cannot ſo conveniently miſperſuade and cheat; † *mentiri non didicêre feræ*, they may be truſted, they are mute, and cannot Lye.

Lying in Communication is worſe than an *unknown* Tongue in *Propheſying*; an *unknown* Tongue can only keep us in Ignorance, but a *Lying* Tongue deceives and injures us: He who ſpeaks to me in a Speech which I know

---

* P. 308. † Martial.

know not is a *Barbarian*; but he who craftily miſguides and betrays me, by a Speech which I am ſuppos'd to know, reſembles a *Being* much blacker than a *Barbarian*. It is unskilfully and diſorderly manag'd, when *Inſtruments* are not made to give diſtinct and proper Significations; *for if the Trumpet give an uncertain Sound, who ſhall prepare himſelf to Battle?* But ſtill it is far more diſorderly and miſchievous, when the Inſtruments of *Signification* ſhall give croſs and contrary *Signs* on purpoſe to perſwade Men to the Wrong; for if when the Trumpets ought to keep ſounding on a Charge, they ſhould on a ſuddain ſound a Retreat, 'tis enough to throw back an Army into Confuſion, and the Rout. Lying is of this latter kind, and therefore is worſe than no Speech at all; it is a perverſe and ungrateful Abuſe of that moſt excellent Gift of God, and therefore ſimply ſinful.

4. Lying muſt needs be ſo, becauſe it is abſolutely inconſiſtent with the Divine Perfections, and is an inherent Quality of the Devil; 'tis abſolutely Inconſiſtent with the divine Perfections, for God can do all things that are poſſible for a perfect Being to do, and yet he cannot poſſibly Lye: *God is not a Man that he ſhould Lye. The Strength of Iſrael will not Lye. It is God that cannot Lye.* God's Promiſe and his Oath, are ſaid to be *two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to Lye*; *yea let God be True, tho' every Man a Lyar.* Surely there muſt be ſomething moſt eſſentially good and perfect in Truth, from which it is not in the Nature

and Power of God himself to depart. And this can be no Secret, for Truth is of that Significancy and Importance, that it is concern'd in the Reality and Sincerity of all Beings: We must first be suppos'd at some certainty about *that*, or else there is nothing in Nature that we can certainly depend upon; we cannot be sure of our own being and meditations; for ought we know it may all be meer Illusion: Nay without admitting the reality of Truth first, we cannot be positive there is a God; wherefore it is remarkable, *He* and his *Son* have chosen to be called by that Name, and will have *God* and *Truth* to be thought as it were the same thing. It was upon this Supposition that *Zorobabel* carried it, in that notable Tryal of Wit before the *Persian* Monarch: * He made *Truth* the Mightiest thing in the Universe: And no wonder, since in his way of Reasoning he makes the great Creator of all Things and *Truth*, to be in effect the same: *Is he not great that maketh these Things? therefore great is* the Truth, *and stronger than all Things.* And *Polybius* is of Opinion, that Truth ought to be adored as a Mighty Deity, who will be acknowledged always to be that which it really is: Above all, the Divine *Plato* represents *Truth* as the very next necessary Idea we can have of God, he is essentially *good* first, and then essentially *true:* And upon this he dictates with such a Sacred Warmth and Inspiration,

* 1 Esd. 4. 35.

ration, that I cannot chuse but rehearse him. Πάντη ἄρα Ἀψευδὲς τὸ δαιμόνιοντε καὶ τὸ Θεῖον. — Κομιδῆ ἄρα ὁ Θεὸς ἁπλοῦν καὶ ἀληθὲς ἔντε ἔργῳ καὶ ἐν λόγῳ. καὶ οὔτε αὐτὸς μεθίσταται, οὔτε ἄλλους ἐξαπατᾷ, οὔτε κατὰ φαντασίας, οὔτε κατὰ λόγους, οὔτε κατὰ σημεῖων πομπὰς, οὐθ' ὕπαρ, οὐδ' ὄναρ. "Therefore as well "the Angelical, as the Divine Nature, must "be perfectly free from Lying: and God, who "is the simplest and purest of Beings, must be "the very Truth it self, both in Word and "Deed; neither subject to Deception, nor "given to deceive; no, not by the Ima-"gination, nor by Reason, nor by Signs, "nor by Vision, nor by Dream. God has indeed been always suppos'd to have that sacred regard for Sincerity and Veracity, that it was said by some of the Ancients, the *Pythagoreans* in Particular, that if God were dispos'd to have his Nature consist of two distinct Parts, as ours does, he would undoubtedly assume *light* for his *Body*, and *truth* for his *Soul*: and *Pythagoras* was heard to say, that he had it from some of the *Magi* in *Egypt*, that their Great *Oromasdes* was in Reality of that very Constitution: On which Account that Philosopher took Occasion to recommend to his Scholars, that above all things they would steadily and inflexibly adhere to *Truth*, because that was the principal way to resemble *God*.

On the Contrary, 'tis expresly said that the Devil was from the Beginning, one *who abode not in the Truth*; as if he fell from *Truth* and the *Perfection* of his Nature both at once; and no sooner was a Lyar, but he was a Devil: Again, that *there is no Truth in him*; as

if

if never to tell the Truth, and to be a Devil, were the same thing: And *when he speaketh a Lye, he speaketh of his Own*, he does not appear in a borrow'd Character, but is truly himself; and also, that *he is the Father of Lying*, it being the most natural thing to him in the World, not only to bring forth Lyes, but to beget and procreate Lyars. In a word, that he is *the Prince of Darkness*; that is, of a sort of Kingdom, utterly opposite to Light, and Truth, and open Dealing.

Now what greater Proof can we need, that Lying is essentially and simply Sinful, than what arises from these two Reflections put together? For if it be inconsistent with the Divine Perfections, we may be sure it is not for its Goodness; if God cannot possibly Lye, there can be no imaginable Reason given for it, but because it is impossible to Lye, and be perfectly Innocent: If it were allowable in any Case, or upon any pretence whatsoever, the *Highest* would have the first Right and Liberty of it in his own Power; but what God can upon no terms permit himself to do, because of his absolute Perfection, we may not presume to venture on without Impeachment of our Imperfection, and our Guilt. But further, consider God under the Attribute of his Veracity, and as he is the very Truth it self, Supream and Universal; and in this Respect we must remember, that every time we Lye, we vary from the great Exemplar and Original of Vertue, we disunite from the great Principle of Goodness, we break with God himself, we become disfigur'd in our Resemblance of him,

we

we are no longer one with him. The great Philoſopher and Emperor *Antoninus* fell in with this Reflection; for, near the beginning of his Ninth Book of Meditations, ſpeaking of *God* under the Notion of *Univerſal Nature*, he goes on thus: "Which ſame *Nature* (ſays "he) is alſo call'd *Truth*; and is the firſt "cauſe of all Things which really and truly "are; and therefore every one who tells a "Lye, muſt of Neceſſity be guilty of Un-"godlineſs, if *wilfully* without Queſtion, for "there is no being Deceitful and Falſe, with-"out being unjuſt; but even tho' he do it *Un-*"*wittingly*, becauſe he becomes diſſonant from "*Univerſal Nature*, and breaks the right "order and harmony of Things, running op-"poſite to that Spirit which informs and "governs the World. The plain Sence of all is, a Man can upon no Terms differ from the Truth, but he muſt differ from God himſelf, becauſe *God is Truth.*

On the other hand, if Lying be an inherent Quality of the Devil, can it poſſibly be ſo, and not be ſimply Evil? Is there any thing imply'd in the Notion and Quality of the Devil that can be Juſtiable and Innocent? Nothing certainly can dwell in him, as a fallen Spirit, but what muſt be Wicked and Degenerate. Briefly, let us judge of the Nature of Lying, by bringing both ſides of this Oppoſition to bear againſt it at a Point: There is the ſame abſolute Contrariety between *Truth* and *Lying*, as there is between *God* and *Devil*; ſo that if *God* and *Truth* be ſimply and eſſentially *Good*, then the *Devil*

vil and *Lying* must be simply and essentially *Evil.*

5. Lying must of necessity be so, because it is unavoidably attended with Injustice and Breach of Trust: compleat and wilful Lying is a Violation of that mutual Faith and compact, which is of Course agreed on and establish'd between Man and Man in the use of Speech. When ever any one pretends to express his Mind to another, with a shew of being regarded in what he offers, and accordingly that other Person consents to lend him Attention, there is in such a Case a plain Bargain or Treaty Concluded; the Condition of which is, that the one shall be Sincere and True in what he expresses, and that the other who attends shall give him Credit. This I say is virtually, tho' not actually the Agreement made, upon which both Words and Signs become Significant; For it is certain, no one would be so Vain and Foolish as to offer them, nor would any Man be so senceless and bewitch'd as to regard them, but upon this Supposition: And therefore in all Cases where Men conceive Suspicions of one another, they do expresly insist upon this Obligation, so naturally and constantly suppos'd in the use of Speech; the Person speaking will positively desire and demand to be believ'd, and if the mistrust lie on the other side, the Person attending will require and urge the other to be Sincere and True in what he says: And that this is always the known avow'd Obligation between them, is from hence farther Evident, because Men who speak are ever as forward

forward to reſent the Injuſtice of not being Credited, as they who give ear are, that of being deceitfully and falſely Inform'd. Now this being the natural and neceſſary compact eſtabliſh'd in Speech, upon which the right uſe of it is founded; it follows, that he who miſleads another by a Lye, does *ipſo Facto* break Faith and Covenant with his Hearer; and by the injuſtice and breach of Truſt, tend to leſſen and defeat that joint Reliance between Man and Man, upon which the true uſe of Speech depends; and I know not how we can well think bad enough of an Evil, which we ſee daily tends to enfeeble Credit and Confidence, and to looſen and crumble away that Cement which holds the Frame and Conſtitution of Human Society together. But,

6. If Lying be not ſimply ſinful, in it ſelf, then it muſt be ſo, if at all, but by pure accident: obſerve then whither we are like to go by this Conſequence; for, what is not ſinful in it ſelf, but only by Accident, muſt be in its own Nature Indifferent; and ſo, as being attended with evil Circumſtances it thereby becomes Evil; ſo if we ſuppoſe it attended with good Circumſtances, then, for the ſame Reaſon, it becomes Good; and by this Account, there is no more harm in Lying, than there is in the ſimple uſe of Speech, which is neither Good nor Evil in it ſelf, but juſt according as we apply it: The next Conſequence to this is, that, provided a Man does not Lye to do Miſchief, he may Lye as long as he pleaſes; it may then be as often requiſite for him to tell a Lye as the Truth, and he may propoſe to do as much good by it

as

as hurt; becauſe a Man may poſſibly be as ſerviceable to his Neighbour, by *Lying* for him, as by being True: Nay, whenever a probability Preſents of doing a Good turn by it, 'twill be a Man's incumbent Duty to Lye: For any thing that is Indifferent in it ſelf, ceaſes to be ſo, and becomes binding upon our Conſciences, when we can turn it to a good End and Purpoſe: and if all this be once admitted, I do not ſee why a common Lyar, who is not maliciouſly and injuriouſly given, ſhould be eſteem'd ſo dirty and ſcandalous a Character. Such Bleſſed Inferences as theſe muſt follow, upon our admitting a Lye to be upon any Pretence Innocent! If it be allow'd and juſtified at all, there will be no end of it. As the train is laid, I do not ſee how we can ſafely venture to touch at a Lye in any Point, but we muſt blow up the Guilt of it to nothing: For, what is indifferent in it ſelf, may be allow'd in harmleſs Jeſting and Diverſion; what may be permitted for our innocent Diverſion, may alſo be allow'd for our juſt Conveniencies; and what we may do for our Conveniency, we may much more be admitted to do when we can propoſe any kind and good Office by it; and if it be *lawful* to Lye for the ſake of doing Good, I am ſure in all ſuch Caſes it will be our incumbent *Duty* to do it, and in conſcientiouſly ſcrupling at a Lye, we ſhall Sin againſt the Laws of Love and Charity. And now methinks the Suppoſition of an innocent Lye begins to look dangerous; the Conſequences of it are inſupportable; and there is no Poſſibility to avoid them that I know off, but by turning about,

and

and ſuppoſing a Lye to be ſimply and eſſentially Evil, and then there is but this one certain and neceſſary Concluſion to follow, namely, *That it is, upon no Pretence or Occaſion whatſoever, allowable.*

7. It may ſerve to confirm this, and give it Countenance and Authority, if we conſider, that ſome of the beſt Heathens did utterly deteſt Lying, as if by natural Reaſon they had ſeen ſomething in it abſolutely and eſſentially Evil. I do not ſay they were all of this Opinion, no more than Chriſtians are; nor do I vouch that thoſe who were ſometimes expreſly of this Mind, were ever exact and conſtant to it; all I pretend to is, that there is an Appearance of ſuch a Principle as this running thro' all their beſt Theology and Morals, from their Ancienteſt Times, and, ever now and then, ſhewing it ſelf in plain and open Profeſſion: And I think it conſiderable enough for Notice upon this Argument, that right Reaſon would often bolt out thro' all the Corruption and Darkneſs of its Natural State, and declare abſolutely againſt Lying.

The Heathens in their earlieſt Account, were wont to Sacrifice to old *Saturn* as the Tutelar God of *Truth*, with their Heads bare; in Token that they would at all times religiouſly and devoutly ſtand to the naked Truth, without any Covering or Diſguiſe. And ſome of the beſt of their oldeſt Fables, ſhew what a ſacred Regard they had for it, when they would chuſe rather to do the ſoreſt and deſperateſt Things againſt their own Inclinations, than refuſe to make good their Words:

Words: *Agamemnon* would sacrifice his Fair and Dear *Iphigenia*, *Neptune* the Chast and Innocent *Hypolitus*; and *Phœbus* would give up the Reins to *Phaeton*, and hazard Firing and Consuming the whole World, rather than be guilty of Receding from what they had said.--- But to come forward to more expres Authorities-----I mention old *Homer* first; not that I build much upon the casual Strains of a Poet; but however, this I think has been justly observ'd of them, that if they have any Sentiments of- Morality correcter and better than Ordinary, they commonly put them in Mouth of their Hero: Thus then he raises the Resentment of *Achilles* against the Deceits and Wiles of *Ulysses*.

* Ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοὶ κεῖνος ὁμῶς ἀϊδαο πύλῃσιν,
Ὅς ἕτερον μὲν κεύθει ἐνὶ φρεσὶν, ἄλλο δὲ βάζει.

i. e. *That Man's Mouth is as odious to me as the Mouth of Hell, who is one thing in his Heart, and another thing at his Tongues end.* Among the Laws of *Solon*, this they say was one, *Do not Lye* †. Even among the the *Indians* it was look'd upon so detestable a Thing, that *Philostratus* observes it was enough to deprive a Magistrate from being ever after capable of bearing Office, not only to be caught in a Lye himself, but to be grosly impos'd upon by another's Lye; because they thought it deprav'd the Life of Man, and tended to the

* Iliad 9. † Diog. Laer. in Vit. Sol. In Vit. Ap. l. 2. c. 12.

the Destruction of Human Society. The *Egyptians* were so rigorously Strict in their Laws for Truth, that * *Diodorus Siculus* says, they would punish a Solemn Lye with Death. And † *Ælian* tells us, that the *Senior* among their Priests, who was, by Course, their Supream Magistrate, wore a rich Sapphire, hung by a Golden Chain about his Neck, and bearing right against his Breast, with this Word Engraven on it, **The Truth**! to intimate, that nothing ought to be more precious to the Desires of Men, nothing more nearly laid to Heart, nor more inviolably fixt upon their Minds, than *Truth*. And, were not those two Words, Urim and Thummim, i. e. *Light* and *Integrity*, legible upon the costly Stones of *Aaron*'s Breast-plate, intended to inculcate the same Moral? The *Persians* thought a Lye base and villianous enough, to be answer'd for by the Blood of him who told it. Those People have been always fam'd for the Discipline of their Youth; and among other Points, they constantly inculcated these three, as the Principal Things they were to learn: * *To draw their Bow dextrously: To mount their Horse gracefully*; and *never to tell a Lye*. *Herodotus* adds, that there were two things which they thought most shameful and abominable, but in effect they both ran into one: The shamefullest thing in the World was Lying; and the shamefullest next to that was to run in Debt: And why? not that they thought it simply an Evil to owe Money, no; but he says

* L. 1. † Hist. Var. li. 14. c. 34. ‡ Herod. Clio.

says their Main Reason for that was, because * *Debtors are under often and violent Temptations to be Lyars.* For the best Authors all agree, that they had an utter hatred and resentment against Lying, beyond all other Vices: In that Historian's Languge it was esteem'd τὸ ἄιχιστον, and by †*Xenophon*'s Account, ἓν τὸ ἐυμισητότατον; *the only thing which, in their Opinion, was out of all Comparison Scandalous and Detestable.* *Epaminondas* that Noble and Gallant *Theban*, will be famous to the World's end for being of this absolute Principle against Lying, that he would never endure it, no not in jest. * *Plutarch* relates the like of *Aristides*, who, he says, was a Man of that fix'd and steady Vertue from a Youth, that he would not admit of the least Falshood or Deceit, no not at his Play. And † *Nepos* says of the Renowned *Attcius*, *Mendacium neque dicebat, neque pati poterat*; *That he could not endure, either to tell a Lye, or to hear one.* And tho', as I said, I lay no great stress upon the strains of a Poet, and least of all upon such as we meet with in the Dialogues of Dramaticks; yet that of *Sophocles* in *Creusa* was so very remarkable, that most Writers on this Subject have thought it worthy their Notice.

It

Καλὸν μὲν ὃν οὐκ ἔστι τὰ Ψευδῆ λέγειν·
Ὅταν δ' ὄλεθρον δεινὸν ἡ ἀλήθεια φέρῃ,
Συγγνωστὸν εἰπεῖν ἐστι, κἀ τὸ μὴ καλόν.

---

* Ibid. † De Inst. Cyr. l. 3. * Vit. Arist. ‡ Vit. Att.

It is by no means just and commendable to tell Lyes; when Truth brings with it the most insupportable mischief, then it can be but pardonable to lye, but it can never be just and commendable------ This I think was said like a nice Casuist: 'Tis a very wise and judicious decision, it is *that*, and all that I am contending for. I confess *Plato* does upon some extream exigencies connive at Lying; and I believe his Authority has misled many a good Author after him; because they talk so often in his special phrase and sence; for it is remarkable enough, that he allows of Lying only in the nature of a *Medicament*, to be used with Sick-Men, and sickly States; Physicians and Ministers may now and then have recourse to it, but none else. * Ἰατροῖς δοτέον, Ἰδιώταις δὲ οὐχ ἁπτέον. Private Men must upon no account be allowed to take that liberty: It would in his Opinion be the very bane and destruction of the Commonwealth if they did. Such a dangerous thing he conceived a Lye to be, notwithstanding that little Toleration he gave it; † and he grounds his reason upon the necessary use of Speech for the dispatch of all business, which must be utterly defeated by Lying. Now when that great Author admits of Lying but just in the nature of a desperate Medicine, he supposes the Case extream, and the application unnatural; if all things were sound, and in order, as they should be, it were to be utterly rejected

* De Rep. l. 3. † Ibid.

jected; and therefore no great advantage can accrue from hence to the lawfulness of Lying. *Aristotle* the Disciple of *Plato*, who used to keep closer to this Point than his Master, who waved all affectation of what might be prettily said, and pressed directly towards truth, and is seldom found to have more than one mind about the same thing; he is so nicely and patly decisive to our purpose, that his very words are just the same thing I am contending for: I have cited the place already: καθ' αὐτὸ τὸ μὲν ψεῦδος & φαῦλον καὶ ψεκτόν. *A Lye is simply in it self both evil and damnable.* And tho' *Tully*, when he harangues for the life of *Ligarius*, would insinuate, that to save a Man by a Lye was to do it *honesto & misericordi mendacio*, yet this was only as Council pleading for his Client, in which the general practice hath been, to try all things that may be said for the Cause right or wrong; insomuch that he himself, in his Oration for *Cluentius*, frankly gives us caution, *that we are vehemently mistaken to imagine, all those things are to be taken for his avowed underwritten Authorities, which are delivered in his Orations at the Bar.* But when he reasons as a Philosopher, a Casuist in natural Religion, he talks after his judicious Friend *Aquilius*, and says, * *ex omni vitâ simulatio & dissimulatio tollenda est:* "Let all hypocrisie and dis-"simulation be banished utterly out of Hu-"man Society; which, notwithstanding the critical *crudè nimis* which † *Grotius* reflected on

* De Off. l. 3. † De Jur. l. 3. c. 7.

on it, was a very juſt and upright wiſh: And in general no Man more ſtrictly inculcated Truth and Sincerity than *Cicero*. As for *Seneca*, the main that I can learn from him is this, that he Speaks of *lighter* Lyes which deſerved a *ſmite on the Mouth*, and of the *greater* ſort, for which the Lyars *Eyes were to be plucked out*,[† *mendacia leviora in quibus os præcidi non oculi erui ſolent*] but I do not remember any kind of Lying he would reckon wholly innocent. Indeed the doctrine of the *Stoicks* in general (if *Laertius*, *Stobæus*, and others who have wrote of them, may be credited) ran ſo high and abſolute againſt all Lying, that they reckon'd it unbecoming a wiſe Man to have ever the leaſt falſhood, deceit, or miſtake found in his words; nay the very utmoſt that *Plato* could ſay in this reſpect of *God*, they would have to be ſaid of *Wiſe Men*. *Plato*'s account of God I have already ſhewn was this, ὅτε αὐτὸς μεθίσαται, ὅτε ἄλλως ἐξαπατᾷ; and that which *Stobæus* ſays, the *Stoicks* maintained of a *Wiſe Man* is exactly the ſame, * ὅτε ἐξαπατᾶται, ὅτε ἐξαπατᾷ ἄλλον; the plain Engliſh of which paſſages put together is this, that herein a *Wiſe Man* ought to act up to the purity and perfection of *God*, and not endure either to be deceived himſelf, or to deceive others, on any pretence whatſoever.

After this manner ran the correcteſt ſence of the wiſeſt Men among the Heathens, before

† Nat. Quæſt. l. 4.

* Vid. *Gatak.* annot. in lib. 4. *M. Anton.* p. 178.

fore Chriſtianity came to overſpread; and ſince that, the very worſt of Tyrants have, now and then, been wrought up to a ſtrange admiration of firm and immoveable Fidelity. Witneſs for one inſtance, that memorable relation concerning *Firmus Biſhop of Tagaſta:* Who, having undertaken to conceal a Perſon under Proſecution, when the Officers came to demand of him where he was, returned them this anſwer, *That he could not tell a Lye to deny the Man, and that he would not be ſo baſe as to betray him.* They tryed to extort it from him upon the Rack, but he bore all with a mute and ſturdy conſtancy: At length they brought him to the Emperor, who, as ſevere a Pagan as he was, could not but ſtand amaz'd at the virtue and firmneſs of the Holy Prelate: Inſomuch that he acquitted him with honour, and ſent liberty to the Man whom he had ſo generouſly protected. And, tho' I don't pretend to paſs the ſenſe of *Julian* for *Goſpel*, yet, ſetting aſide the *Apoſtate*, his Morals were reckoned ſound: It is, therefore, the more worthy our notice, that he dictated this Maxim to the Chriſtians, * *If there be the leaſt wilful diſagreement between the Tongue and the mind, it is diſhoneſt, tho' there be none other Aggravation in it.* And now, if natural reaſon would ſo frequently take occaſion to break out, and ſhine thro' all the corruptions of Heatheniſm, with ſo propitious an eye upon abſolute Sincerity and Truth, and give

ſo

* Ep. 42.

ſo many ſevere looks, and ſhew ſuch utter indignation againſt the Sin of Lying, this muſt help confirm us, that there is evil inherent and eſſential in it, which no excuſe whatever can intirely do away.

I ſhall finiſh authorities with *Sanderſon*, and *Aquinas*; becauſe, in thoſe two Judicious Men, we may read the ſober ſenſe both of the *Romiſh* Church, and of our own. "* We know "not, *ſaith Sanderſon*, any greater good, for "there is not any greater good, than the "glory of God; we ſcarce know a leſſer "Sin, if any Sin may be accounted little, "than an harmleſs, officious Lye; Yet may "not *this* be doue, no not for that! *Will "you Speak Wickedly for God, and talk de-"ceitfully for him?* And if not for the Glory "of God, then certainly not for any other "inferior End.------ † And *Aquinas* declares it his Opinion, *That if we could imagine there were no God, and that Lying were forbidden by no law, yet would Lying be a vitious, and immoral Evil.*

8. My laſt Argument for this is, That Lying is ſimply and utterly forbidden by God; which after all muſt be our ſure and determining Rule of Conſcience. His Command againſt it was early and abſolute; *Ye ſhall not deal falſely, neither Lye one to another*, which, being part of the Moral Law,

F muſt

* Serm. on Rom. 3. 8. † Tamerſi deus non eſſet, nec mendacium lege prohibuiſſet, fore tamen mendacium peccatum. 1. 2. qu. 71. art. 6.

muſt be of Unchangeable Obligation. And the Senſe and Stile of the Bible is the ſame every where. *Lying Lips are an abomination to the Lord. The Lord ſhall deſtroy them that Speak Lyes; and all falſe ways he utterly abhors.* And when *Solomon* bids us *buy the Truth*, he means, it may ſometimes perhaps coſt us dear, nevertheleſs he would have no conſideration of that kind, part us from ſo precious a bargain; and again, *ſell it not:* We may often fanſie our intereſt vaſtly concerned to recede a little from the Truth, but it is his Opinion that we miſtake our true intereſt if ever we do; his meaning is, that, for no advantage in the World, tho' never ſo conſiderable, ſhould we allow our ſelves to tell a Lye: it is utterly againſt his Mind that Truth ſhould ever become mercenary. In the New Teſtament the *Lyar* is joyned with the *Devil:* * *He is a Lyar, and the Father of it.* In the ſame place *Lyars* are repreſented the very Spawn of the Devil: *Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the Luſts of your Father ye will do: He was a Murtherer from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth, becauſe there is no Truth in him.* In the *Revelations* it is ſaid, that *all Lyars have their part in the Lake which burneth with Brimſtone, which is the ſecond Death:* Beſides ſeveral plain and poſitive Precepts againſt the Sin by way of Exhortation: And in all the Cenſures and Condemnations iſ-

ſued

* John 8. 44.

ſued out againſt it in Scripture, this one thing is to be obſerved, that they are peremptory, and abſolute, without Condition: If Circumſtances were allowed to alter the Caſe, Methinks 'tis ſtrange that none of thoſe Texts ſhould be delivered with any expreſs proviſion for that purpoſe: 'Tis much the Divine Spirit ſhould no where ſay, *thou ſhalt not Lye, but upon a very innocent and good occaſion*; but if the Word of God does no where *give*, of it ſelf, I am ſure we cannot venture to *ſtretch*, but we muſt *break* it. From all theſe Conſiderations taken together, I am firmly perſwaded, *that Evil and Guilt is ſo eſſentially and ſimply inherent in the very nature of a Lye, that it is in no Caſe, and upon no Pretence whatſoever allowable and ſafe, in point of Conſcience, to have Recourſe to it.*

SECT. III.

Whether thoſe Exceptions which have been made, to this general Rule, in ſome Special Caſes, are to be Admitted.

NOtwithſtanding what has hitherto been ſaid, there are, I muſt own, ſome few Caſes, which partly from Cuſtom, and partly from Expedience, may be thought to carry ſome reaſonable excuſe for Lying, which I ſhall now particularly Conſider and Anſwer.

1. In the Firſt place, It may be Queſtion'd, Whether an *Advocate* may not Innocently ſay things in the way of *Pleading*, which he believes are falſe, at leaſt, which he does not know to be true. And I Anſwer: To ſuggeſt uncertain and doubtful things, and make Oppoſition to a Plauſible appearance, and affirm or deny for the ſake of bringing the Point to an Iſſue, and gainſay the truth only to put it upon more Satisfactory Proof and Evidence, may conſiſt with Juſtice and Honour, and be fairly accounted for, under the Caſe of *Diſputation*: But when once we take upon us, Poſitively and Confidently to Aſſert, with an Air of Expecting to be credited in our Pleading, our Integrity lies at Stake upon our Propoſitions; And the Solemnity of the place, and the Importance of the Occaſion, ſhould oblige

oblige us to be rather more Careful and Conſcientious of what we ſay, than if we were in common Converſation: What we offer in this, or any other Reſpect, with a Show of Sincerity, and with a Deſign and Proſpect of having it believed, comes up to the Guilt and Scandal of Compleat Lying: And I cannot Perſuade my ſelf, there is any thing in the manner of doing this as Council at the Bar, ſave cuſtom only, that can give it any favourable Gloſs. Here our Falſehoods cannot be ſuppoſed Indifferent or Harmleſs, they draw dangerous Conſequences after them; our Lyes are Levelled at the Lives or Properties of other Men; and if they take any Effect at all, it muſt be of a Pernicious and Injurious Nature, in Defence of the Wrong-doer, and to the Oppreſſion of the Juſt and Innocent; which to ſay no worſe, is to be a little Unfortunate in our *Retainment*. *Solomon* ſays ſome-what more: *He that Juſtifieth the Wicked, and he that Condemneth the Juſt, are both alike Abomination to the Lord:* But he who ſtands up and endeavours, by Solemn Falſehoods, to carry a Diſhoneſt Cauſe, does both at once; and is Abominable and Shameleſs beyond all Excuſe.

If it be ſaid, that the Profeſſion binds us to do the beſt we can for our Client: I Anſwer: The beſt we can do for him in a Wicked Cauſe, is to tell him that his Cauſe is Wicked, and Adviſe him to Drop it; And if this will not do, the beſt thing next to this is, to do nothing at all for him, leaſt we do too much for our own Reputation. To put a Lying flouriſh upon a lame Title, is to make

the Caſe and the Pleading of a Piece; It is to *draw Iniquity with Cords of Vanity*; It brings us Acceſſary and Confederate in the Crime, and *Partaker in Another's Sin*; and we ſtand corrected by that reproof of David; *When thou ſaweſt a Thief then thou Concentedſt with Him.* To be of Councel in the Laws is an Honourable Profeſſion; but to manage it without Honour, is an odd way of proving it ſo: It perverts and Overthrows the right End and uſe of it, which is to Unravel Difficulties and Doubts, and make Truth and Juſtice appear in the beſt Light: But Falſehoods and Fallacies are very unlikely means to this End; nor can they be made uſe of with any Intention that they ſhould be Credited, but they muſt Involve us in the Guilt of Pernicious Lying; which is what we ſhould not have recourſe to for the ſake of God himſelf, much leſs for a Client: Evil meaſures muſt not be taken for a good Cauſe, but leaſt of all, for *that* which is moſt likely to need them.

2. *Query*, Whether Kings, and Supream Rulers, are bound up to the ſame ſtrict ſincerity in their words and Significations, as private Men? In a thing eſſentially and ſimply ſinful, I cannot ſee how it can be otherwiſe, unleſs God will Judge Princes by a different Rule and Law, from that which every private Chriſtian expects to be tryed by: *Grotius*, one would think, imagined ſome ſuch thing, when he admitted *that Supream Rulers* [*Qui jus habent ſupereminens in omnia jura alterius,*] *may lawfully Lye to their Inferiors.*

Indeed

Indeed Kings, as ſuch, are not to be conſidered as particular and private Men, but as whole Nations; and ſo, what they do in their Political or Regal Capacity, may poſſibly be judged hereafter by the Law of Nations; and this may ſerve to acquit them of a great many State devices, from which they could not be ſo eaſily acquitted by the Law of Chriſt. But Superiority after all, is no juſt privilege for Lying. The Supream himſelf does not pretend to it: And therefore it muſt be a very prophane preſumption for any Ruler on Earth to claim it under him: His Vicegerents muſt not think to uſurp that for a Prerogative, which he cannot diſpenſe with or endure in himſelf. But there can be no colour for juſtifying them in ſuch ignoble Arts, when they make them the means of incroaching and invading upon the Dominions of other Princes; for to break out of bounds is of it ſelf Inhuman, unleſs we meaſure humanity by *Hobs* his ſtate of Nature; therefore Lying and Perfidiouſneſs, when made ſubſervient to that End, can admit of no poſſible defence; unleſs we go again from the *Bible* to the *Leviathan*, and ſay, *that Power irreſiſtible will juſtifie any thing.* Luſt of Dominion had need work *Exorbitantly* upon the paſſions of a Prince to carry him on, when he conſiders how much diſhonourable dirty, and ſcandalous work muſt be plung'd through to enlarge it; It is Aſtoniſhing to think, how one Man (for a Monarch it but a Man) can be made capable of enduring miſery enough to ſatisfie Divine Juſtice for a Reign of fifty Years devoted altogether to Falſehood, Treachery, Rapine,

Perſecution, and Blood. Surely there can be ſcarce any middle Condition hereafter in the Lot of Princes; they muſt be *Chiefs*, whether in Heaven or Hell: And as the very Angels will make way *above* for a King, who has taken all the meaſures of his Government by the Rules of Juſtice and Religion, and acquitted himſelf a wiſe and watchful Guardian of his People; ſo *Lucifer* himſelf will ſtand ready *beneath*, to embrace and welcome a deſcending Power, who has been contending, and ſtrugling away a whole Age, in fruitleſs Contrivances and Lying Artifices, to inſult, and over-run the World: the Arch-Fiend muſt needs be Tranſported in Horrour, at the approach of ſo Conſiderable an Image and Reſemblance of himſelf. But then, how far other Princes may Practiſe in the crooked arts of Diſſimulation and Lying, to traverſe and defeat the purpoſes of ſuch a *Power*, whether they may obſtruct by the ſame falſe meaſures wherewith they are invaded, and uſe the ſame unfair tools to countermine, by which they are undermin'd, is a nicer point; and perhaps the unfitteſt in the world to be determined in this Diſcourſe, wherein I have put my ſelf under the Government of this ſtiff and inflexible Principle, that *Lying is intrinſecally, ſimply and eſſentially Sinful.*

3. *Query*, Whether it be lawful to make uſe of Lying and unſincerity againſt an Enemy in time of War? Now tho' this were too ſtubborn and unruly a Queſtion to take a fair

fair Anſwer, yet it could give no Countenance at all to the Practice of it among Men, in a ſtate of Society and Peace: It is ſufficient to tye up our Tongues from one another, in that 'tis ſimply unlawful as long as we live in Friendſhip and Union; until we come to profeſs'd and open Hoſtility, it is not made the Queſtion.

Again, War is ſuch a ſavage and inhuman State, that many have diſputed whether it be lawful in it ſelf; and there is but one Caſe that I know of, wherein we can be certain, without a Revelation, that it is: And that is in our own neceſſary Defence and Security. And this will ſerve to reſolve the Queſtion before us, beyond all doubt, as far as it regards, at leaſt, the one half of all the Battles and Hoſtilities in which the World either has been, or can be embroil'd; for whatſoever is unlawful in time of Peace, we may be ſure will be no leſs ſo in an unrighteous War: wicked Ends, and unjuſt Cauſes, can never Sanctifie unlawful Meaſures.

But, ſuppoſe we are confident paſt ſcruple, that the War we are engag'd in is Juſt and Unavoidable; yet ſtill I believe I ſtand upon a firm Principle, and therefore am the more forward to aſſert, that Lying is utterly diſallowable in a Righteous War; nay farther, that we ought not to break Faith even with Pyrates and Robbers, if we once conſent to Treat and Capitulate with them, and there are Terms agreed on by both Parties: It may be pleaded, that we are violently threatned and urg'd to ſpeak againſt our Minds: but if to ſave our ſelves from ſuffer-

ings were a juſt Excuſe for evil Doings, there would be little or nothing in all the paſſive Vertues of Religion. Beſides, what ſuch deſperate Villains make us ſay, they commonly make us ſwear; and then we muſt remember, that we become bound not only to Man, but to God himſelf; and ſo, tho' we could ſuppoſe our ſelves *ipſa facto* loos'd from the former Bond, yet the latter muſt hold us faſt.

After this there can be no room for queſtioning, if we muſt keep Faith with Enemies in a fair War: For we know there are Laws depending even in Arms; and there are *rights of War as well as Peace:* And the principal end of a Righteous War ought to be, for bringing about a Peace that may be ſecure and laſting. In order to this, the ſtricteſt regard imaginable ought to be had to that, which alone can be the proper and effectual Means for that end, which is the Preſervation of a mutual Faith and Honour; without which nothing but Miſtruſt, and Diſtance, and Defiance ſhall paſs between the hoſtile Parties; and they can never come to Treat, becauſe they have no Foundation for Confiding in one another. Generous Enemies are ſtill to remember, that they are dealing with Men; and that the Accidents of War ought not to take away all the common Rights and Relations of Nature. The Vertuous Heathens had always a due Reſpect to this Reflection; inſomuch that when * *Camillus* went out againſt the *Faliſci*, he declar'd he would

* Livy.

would ſtill maintain that Society and Friendſhip with them, which was inbred in Human Nature: The Firſt and Fundmental Principle of which is, To be True and Faithful to the Confidence we repoſe in one another; which Confidence even profeſs'd Enemies do pretend to, as often as they have any intercourſe by any known ſignificant Words or Signs; and conſequently, to make them Inſtrumental of any falſe and deceitful Dealing is Sinful, and Injurious, and done in breach of that eſtabliſht Compact, which is always ſuppoſed depending, in the right uſe of Speech. Indeed ſuch great and weighty Conſequences attend our Expreſſions of Honour in War, that Military Overtures do require the ſtricteſt and ſevereſt Truth, and there ſhould be ſomething more ſolemn and inviolable in our *Parole*, than in our common Word.

It is true, that, while Men are ſtanding off at Defiance and Hoſtility, mutual Reliance ceaſes; and therefore, till ſuch avow'd Overtures are made and accepted, as are proper to renew it, they are free to *put* upon one another by Diſcretionary Signs and Motions; And as the Party *miſled* thereby cannot complain that he is cheated, while he knew he was to place no Confidence, ſo neither muſt the Party *miſleading* by ſuch Diſcretionary Signs, be charged with Lying, becauſe he does not pretend Sincerity in them. All the buſineſs is, to diſtinguiſh between ſuch Signs and Expreſſions as are, and ſuch as are not of Credit and Confidence: And, where is a *Sentinel* ſo ſtupid and unexperienced, as not

to

to understand, in what Expressions he is, and in what he is not trust his Enemies.

To give Instances in each kind.------If we cry, *Victory!* while the Battle is undecided, or make sham Signals, and false Alarms, or amusing Marches and Counter-marches; it being well known that such as these are not Overtures of good Faith and Trust, but hostile Stratagems, the Party that suffers himself to be deceiv'd in Trusting to them, does it at his own Peril: For, knowing well they were by no means to be relyed upon, he has no cause of Complaining, that he was falsely and perfidiously Dealt with by them. And these will give Generals sufficient Scope, for all the fair Arts and Stratagems of War: For, as it is no foul play in *Wrestlers*, to make false Trips, and deluding Offers, in order to lay their Antagonist upon his Back; nor in *Swords-Men*, to falsifie, dazle, and *throw* deceitfully, to draw one another from their Guard, there being no breach of Trust in all this, So, neither is it dishonourable by the Laws of Arms, but the Wisdom and Conduct of Commanders, to make use of Feints and Semblances, Intreagues and Ambuscades, or any Arts of Surprise or Force, to get the Day; provided they do not misuse any such Expressions or Signals to deceive, which, by Custom and common Usage, bespeak Confidence and Honour on both Sides. For, as touching such Discretionary Signs and Motions, we are so far from breaking any Faith or Trust by turning them to our Account, that our Enemies are aware they are not to rely upon them, they know that they are made

made uſe of on purpoſe to enſnare them, and that they carry none other certain Signification: And therefore, if they will pretend to decypher our Characters, or unfold our doublings, or gueſs at our Amuſements, they may thank themſelves if they are miſtaken to their Detriment: For we are in *no caſe* bound to explain to all the World, what we mean by every Arbitrary Sound or Geſture, and much leſs are we bound to do it *in War*; becauſe the tyes of Civility, Friendſhip, and Charity, which, in a ſtate of Peace, would with-hold us from uſing any ſuch Diſcretion to our Neighbours Diſappointment, are no tyes upon us at all in a State of Hoſtility.----But then,

On the other Hand, if once we pretend to deſert, or to call out for Quarter, or to beat the Chamade, or to ſound for a Parley, or to hang out the Flag of Truce, or to make uſe of any ſuch Expreſſions or Signs which are well known and underſtood, to be peaceable Overtures, and Significations of entring into Confidence, we cannot deceive and betray by ſuch truſty Means, but we muſt be guilty of perfidious Lying: Such Signs as theſe are, in all Caſes, but more eſpecially in Caſe of War, to be made uſe of with the niceſt Fidelity and Honour. Lying is a provoking Injuſtice amonſt Friends, but it may be barbarouſly Unjuſt between Enemies: Such Overtures are ſacred, by the Laws of God, of Nature, and of Nations; and who can queſtion whether we ought to be juſt and punctual in the Uſe of them? We have no ſooner interchang'd Expreſſions of Reliance,

but

but all Inſtances of Falſhood and Unſincerity take up their wonted Name and Guilt; and every deceitful, perfidious Untruth, becomes the baſeſt and worſt of Lying. And I need not give a ſurer Demonſtration of this, than by remembring you, that all counterfeit Deſerters, and Spies, and Fighters under falſe Colours, are no ſooner ſeiz'd but they are executed: And thoſe Commanders who fire upon their Enemies, after they have made their Signal of Submitting, are treated as Murtherers, and allow'd no Quarter.

This is ſuch a known avowed Doctrine, *that Faith, as far as we profeſs it, is to be kept ſacred with our Enemies*; that general Conſent, and the Neceſſity of the thing have left no room to draw it into Diſpute; and therefore, brave Enemies have as much ſignaliz'd their Honour in War by Inſtances of their Faith and Sincerity, as of their Courage. When *Regulus* was ſurpriz'd and taken by the *Carthagians*, in the firſt Punick War, and ſent to the *Roman* Senate to treat about Exchanges, tho' in the Senate he gave his own Advice and Vote againſt the Propoſal he brought, yet having left his Parole with the Enemy to return, he came back and ſurrender'd himſelf at *Carthage*, with a peremptory Refuſal of what they ſent him to Negotiate, tho' he knew he had nothing but a barbarous end to look for: And, it is ſaid, they cut off his Eyelids, and roll'd him to Death in a Cask ſtruck full of Nails; yet this was more eligible to the Gallant *Conſul*, than the diſgrace of breaking

ing his Word. * *Tully* tells us, that when *Themiſtocles* made an Offer to the *Athenian* Senate, of Burning the Enemy's Fleet by Stratagem, while they were in the Port of *Gytheum*, they ſent the Philoſopher *Ariſtides*, to examine him by what Device he would do it; he came back, and told them, that the Expedient look'd feaſible enough, but it would not look Upright and Honourable; upon this they were ſo far from approving it, that they would not have the Patience to hear what it was: Saying, *Quod honeſtum non eſſet, id ne utile quidem putaverunt*; "That could be no "Advantage at all, which was not an Honour-"able One. The *Romans* would, upon Occaſion, give aſtoniſhing Proofs of their Faithfulneſs in War; they dealt all along upon Honour, even with the Inſidious, Falſe *Carthaginian*; inſomuch that when a Priſoner eſcap'd from him but by an Equivocation, they took care to ſend him back again with diſgrace: And in the Opinion of all brave Men, *Hannibal* loſt more Honour by his Perfidious Faithleſs Dealing, than he ever won by the Succeſſes of his Conduct. 'Twas a Smart reflection of *Valerius*, *Bellum adverſus Italiam profeſſus, adverſus ipſam fidem acrius geſſit*; "He declared War againſt *Italy*, but he "waged it with all his Fury againſt Faith "and Honour. For which Reaſon we may remark, the *Lord of Hoſts* would not let him go off in Triumph, his End was Inglorious. And when *Homer* undertakes to ſtrike the *Trojans*

* De Off. l. 3.

Trojans with a conſcious ſence of their miſfortunes, it is obſervable, he does not forget to make them reflect remorſefully upon their violations of Military Faith and Honour; Νῦν δ' ὄρκια πιστὰ ψευσάμενοι μαχόμεσθα ——— *We have fought like Lyars, perjured Lyars; hinc illæ lacrymæ!* -------*Troy* was extinguiſhed by the *Græcian*, and *Carthage* by the *Roman* Powers: Not ſo much I believe by being out-done by the arts and diligences of War, but by depending too much upon the devices of Falſehood and Treachery, which may *take* peradventure for the preſent, but never hold out to be crown'd with compleat ſucceſs. And if I had none other light to divine by, methinks I could venture, from this one Omen, to preſage, that the prevailing, exorbitant Power, which now troubles *Europe*, muſt and will *down*; it fetches large and heavy ſtrides, upon unſound and hollow Ground, upon the foundation of deceit and perfidiouſneſs; which may bear to be trod lightly over, for a ſtep or two, but when it comes to be inſiſted on, and preſſed with great ſtreſs and oppoſition, it will be apt to give way.

Providence, as indifferent as it may ſeem to ſit over the ordinary Affairs of this World, ſeldom fails to ſtep in between contending Powers, and give it againſt thoſe who make uſe of treachery and foul play, by a deciſion that ſhall be remarkable enough to ſtand for a warning; and perhaps the greateſt ſingle blow the Chriſtian Cauſe ever received, may be mentioned as one inſtance of this; I mean the Battle of *Varnes*, which *Ladiſlaus* King

of

of *Hungary* loſt to the Grand Seignior *Amurat:* He was of himſelf a very proſperous and hopeful young Prince, but having made a Solemn League of Peace with the Sultan, he was by too much eaſineſs prevailed upon, at the inſtance of Cardinal *Julien*, to take the Field againſt him again, without the leaſt freſh provocation; and becauſe he ſcrupled at the obligation of his League and Oath to the contrary, *that* was all made void by the authority of the *Holy See.* The injured *Turk*, in the heat of the Battle, loudly exclaimed againſt the violation of a Treaty ſo ſolemnly and religiouſly made: He called Heaven and Earth to witneſs, and conjured the Higheſt to judge between them: In the paſſion of his remonſtrance, he appealed to *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf, and vowed he could not be ſuch a God-like Being as the *Chriſtians* believed and repreſented him, if he did not revenge the Contempt and Blaſphemy that was offered to his Sacred Name, to be invoked upon Oaths and Treaties, to which his Votaries had ſo little regard. In concluſion, the total overthrow of the Chriſtians, and the death of the King, and of the Cardinal Legat upon the ſpot, the ruine of the *Hungarian* Kingdom, and of the *Græcian* Empire which followed; and, as the conſequence of this, the vaſt progreſs that was made after that by the *Ottoman* Arms, may be allowed to make an exemplary admonition, *That Faith ought to be kept with the worſt of Enemies*; and that Heaven will have Truth and Juſtice done, tho' the cauſe of Heaven ſink under it; and let the moral

of

of that unfortunate Prince's Epitaph, plain as it is, be read with a ſerious regard, *Diſcite mortales non temerare fidem.* To conclude, Faith and Honour ſhould bind and determine us at all times, but in War more eſpecially; not only becauſe injurious falſehoods are *then* likely to be moſt fatal and irretrieveable, but becauſe if Enemies once entred upon hoſtilities, are to abandon all truth and truſt to one another, it is unconceiveable how they ſhould ever come to capitulate for Peace; no end can be put to the diſpute, but, on one ſide or other, it muſt be an utter end.

We muſt then, you ſee, have a devout reſpect to Truth and Sincerity in War; and therefore there can be no imaginable caſe or pretence, wherein we may be allowed to Lye. 'Twill be ſaid that, at this rate, an upright Man has a hard Chapter on't, and Knaves will very often have him at mercy; but to this I ſhall only reply at preſent, That when Lying is made appear to be ſimply and abſolutely evil, it ſuppoſes that all alike are bound to forbear it: This Principle, of it ſelf, gives no advantages at all to one Man more than another; it directs how Human Society ought to be diſpoſed, without making any allowance for the condition in which it is; and if Knaves will break off all the ties of Vertue and Honour, and Lye, they ſhall one time or other ſmart for it: And Men of Integrity muſt ſit down contented with this comfort, That if juſt and fair dealing lays them under ſome preſent Inconveniencies; beſides the recompence of

a

a quiet Conſcience, and very probably larger advantages in long run here, they are ſure it will turn to their account with infinite amends hereafter. If they are righteous upon Conſcience they muſt believe this; and if they do, there is no need of urging them to be ſatisfied.

And, As I do from my Soul believe, the Principle I have been eſtabliſhing to be founded upon the ſoundeſt and cleareſt reaſon, ſo I am perſuaded it has the beſt Claim to that, which can be the only prevalent pretence, that has retained the generality on the other ſide; I mean the benefit and relief of Mankind; for tho' a kind and charitable Office may poſſibly be done by Lying, yet infinitely more advantages would accrue from our reſolutions never to Lye at all: So that if we compounded to give up the pretended ſervices, that may be brought about for our friends and ſelves by the unmalicious ſorts of Lying, for the ſake of the many real and inexpreſſible good conſequences that would follow from our ſtrict and inviolable adherence to the truth, Human Society would be no loſer by the ratification of ſuch an exchange. Whereas, on the other hand, I have yet this main prudential exception to make againſt giving any allowances to Lying, That, by admitting it lawful in ſome Caſes, we open ſuch a wide gap for the ſallies of a deceitful Mind, that there will be no knowing where to reſtrain them. The greateſt part of Men want no inclination to deceive, if they can but find a pretence; and what pretence can they

they want, if they may lawfully Lye in all caſes, but ſuch as are flatly Criminal and penal? How many ſecret Frauds and Extortions will this connivence encourage them to bring about by Lying? How much Sycophantiſm, and Flattery? How much Calumny, Tale-bearing, and Detraction? What miſerable Work muſt it make in all Commerce, and Converſation, if this Subtile, Encroaching Evil ſhould once be let looſe, with ſo large, and laviſh a Toleration?

To conclude this head.---They who think it neceſſary to licence all Charitable and Officious Lying, eſpecially when it is to ſave Life, or to do Conſiderable good, ſeem to forget the Divine Superintendency, to make little account of Inviſible Interpoſal, and to put no truſt at all in Providence; but to lay ſuch intire ſtreſs upon Human Means and Management, as if they had no notion of any ſuch Over-ruling Principle as a God, concerning it ſelf in the affairs of this World: Whereas the critical time when we have nothing elſe to do, but to look up to God, and Reſign our ſelves to his Wiſdom, and to Truſt and to his Controlling Power and Will is, when our Caſe is ſo Deſperate and Extream, that we know not how to ſerve or to ſave our ſelves, without Falſehood and Sin. Then ſhould we ſubmit our Condition to the pleaſure of our Heavenly Father, to do for us as he thinks fit; but we ſhould not be tempted *to do Evil that good may come.*

* The

* The celebrated Arch-biſhop of *Cambray* ſupports this Conſideration with great Judgment and Honour; whoſe authority ſhould, in this Caſe, be ſo much the greater, as a Prelate of the *Romiſh* Church: He repreſents his Hero *Telemachus* thus anſwering *Narbal*'s Importunity, when he preſſes him to ſave his Life by a Lye.----Suffer me to Periſh, "ſince "fate has decreed my Deſtruction. I know "how to Dye but I cannot perſuade my "ſelf to Speak a Lye: I am not a *Cyprian*; "I cannot ſay that I am. The Gods ſee "my Sincerity; It belongs to them to "preſerve my Life by their Power: But I "will not ſave it by a Falſehood. *Narbal* "*reply'd*----This Falſehood, O *Telemachus*, is "in all reſpects, Innocent. It cannot be "Diſapproved by the Gods; It does no injury to any one; It ſaves the lives of two Innocent Perſons; and deceives the King, only "to prevent him from committing a great "Crime. You carry the Love of Virtue "too far, and are too nice an Obſerver "of Truth.----*To which Telemachus.*----But "Falſehood is Falſehood ſtill; And, on that "Account, Unworty of a Man who Speaks "in the Preſence of the Gods, and owes "the Higheſt Reverence to Truth. He "that offends Truth, offends the Gods, "and Injures himſelf, becauſe he Speaks "againſt his Conſcience. Propoſe no more, "O *Narbal*, that which is Unworthy of "us both! If the Gods have any Pity for "us

* Advert. of Telemac. p. 83. Engl. Ed.

" us, they know how to Deliver us: But " if they ſuffer us to Periſh, we ſhall fall " Victims to Truth, and leave an Exam- " ple to Inſtruct Men, to prefer Unble- " miſhed Vertue before long Life; So far that Excellent Author. Whereas to indulge in a liberty of Lying, in our own neceſſary Defence and Security, would be the way to Introduce ſuch an officious, endleſs Evil, into the Affairs of Mankind; that as a Noble Hiſtorian of our obſerved very juſtly, * *No ſingle Preſervation could be worth ſo general a Wound and Corruption of Human Society.*

---

* Lord Clar. v. 2. p. 333.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Cauſes and Inducements to Lying.

SINCE it has appear'd, I hope, by the reſult of what has paſs'd, that 'tis ſimply and utterly unlawful to tell a Lye; I will ſet my ſelf now to enquire,

III. *How this Sin comes notwithſtanding to be ſo notoriouſly practiſed? And to eſcape from us ſo lightly and unregretfully as it does?* Which is the ſubſtance of my third Propoſal, *viz. to conſider ſome of the many Cauſes and Inducements, whence Men come to be ſo generally and notoriouſly given up to Lying.* And herein I am in the right courſe to my main aim and end; for it is one very neceſſary ſtep toward the reducing any Evil, to take notice from what temptations it ariſes; Juſt as a Phyſician, in order to deal effectually with a Diſeaſe, not only obſerves the Symptoms, for they are obvious, but endeavours to follow and trace it up to the faulty cauſe in the conſtitution from which it ſprings: Or, as he who undertakes to divert and drain an overflowing inundation (to which Lying, as it now prevails, may more fitly be compared) muſt caſt about and diſcover all the Springs and Rivulets, and Falls of Water, that are confluent to the ſwelling Evil: Now

ſeveral

ſeveral things are remarkable for cauſes and inducements to the general practice of this Sin, which I ſhall conſider and reflect on in ſuch a manner, as may be moſt uſeful to give you caution againſt them. And,

1*ſt.* 'Tis to be fear'd the Sin of Lying was, by the ſpecial inſinuation of the Devil, carefully and deeply leavened into our Natures, when firſt depraved at the Fall; 'twas by a Lye the Serpent brought that matter to bear; and finding it upon trial ſuch an apt invention for miſchief, no doubt he took effectual meaſures to impart the talent among us, that we might upon occaſion try the like Practices with it upon one another: And ſo as Mankind increaſed, the Lye went about, and no Sin perhaps has more univerſally gain'd upon the Minds of Men, and is a ſurer ſign and proof that we are fallen, than *this.* God made our Underſtandings ſtraight, direct, and true, but Lying ſhews how miſerably they have ſince been bent, and warp'd, and crooked. *God made Man upright*, but this is one of the many wicked *inventions he has ſought out*, from the example of the Devil. To this purpoſe I have often took notice of a certain paſſage which St. *Paul* wrote to the *Epheſians*, [c. iv. *v.* 17. 22, 23, 24.] where counſelling them *that they henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,*----- but *that they put off, concerning the former converſation, the old Man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful luſts; and be renewed in the Spirit of their Mind, and that they put on the*

new

new Man, which after God is created in Righteouſneſs, and true Holineſs; when he comes to put them into the ready Method how they ſhould begin and compaſs this great change of Life, the firſt and principal thing he minds them of is this, *v.* 25. *Wherefore putting away Lying, ſpeak every Man Truth with his Neighbour.* Which being put together, is as much as if he had ſaid, there is not a truer Token of the Degeneracy and Corruption of our fallen Natures, after the Example of old *Adam*, than our being ſo wretchedly given up to cheat, and to be cheated by Lying; nor on the other Hand, is there a ſurer and nearer way to recover that divine and pure Principle of Underſtanding, and likewiſe that new and upwright Frame of Heart, in which Man was originally form'd after the Image of God, and by which the Divine Reſemblance and Similitude is to be reſtor'd, than by an abſolute Adherence to Truth: Which ſenſe may be farther ſupported by this Remark, that what is there rendred *true Holineſs*, is ὁσιότητα τῆς ἀληθείας, *the Holineſs of Truth*; as if the Divine Nature did principally conſiſt in a ſacred inviolable Veracity: And that, to be renew'd again to the likeneſs of God, it were Neceſſary that we ſhould be new made, and faſhion'd after the pattern of him, who is the Perfection of *Holy Truth.* And, either *Antoninus* muſt have met with ſome Chriſtian Account, of Man's Degenerating from his Original State, or elſe he gueſſed Judiciouſly and Divinely, when he thus deſcribes our pre-

ſent unhappy Propenſions to Lying, * Ἀφορμὰς γὰρ προσειλήφει παρὰ τῆς φύσεως ὧν ἀμελήσας, ἐχ δίός τέ ἐστι νῦν διακρίνειν τὰ ψευδῆ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀληθῶν. i. e. *the Diſpoſitions which Man drew from Nature were Equal and Upright; but, by neglecting to follow them, he is now no longer in Capacity to diſcern between Truth and Faſhood.* Now, to recover the rectitude of our Primitive and Perfect Nature, and be repair'd and renew'd again, after the pattern of that Exact and Upright Man, which God made for a little Image of himſelf, we muſt reſolve to begin the Change and Renovation by putting away this degenerate, and deviliſh Habit of Lying. But primitive Corruption is a remote Cauſe to look back upon. To touch us therefore a little nearer,-----

2. I am apt to think many take Heart and Encouragement, that Lying cannot be ſuch an eſſential and egregious an Evil, from the Conſideration that there are ſeveral Inſtances of it in Scripture, which ſeem to be countenanced and approv'd. I ſhall not pretend to mention every exceptionable Caſe, but only the moſt remarkable and notorious; and if I can get you to be ſatisfied about them, the leſs liable ones can be no let to your Integrity. And to be the more diſtinct and clear in this Important Point, I ſhall conſider particularly, what may be ſcrupled at in the beſt Examples under the *Jewiſh* Law; What may be objected in Relation to Chriſt and his Apoſtles

* L. 9.

Apoſtles under the Goſpel; and Laſtly, what we may poſſibly ſtumble at in Reſpect to God himſelf. And

Firſt, In Reference to the beſt Examples of Old, Let us begin with the Caſes of the Patriarchs; which were theſe. *Abraham* being juſt entring into *Egypt* with the lovely *Sarai*, and not knowing what Inconvenience her Beauty might bring upon him, he put this Fallacy into her Mouth; *Say I pray thee that thou art my Siſter, that it may be well with me for thy Sake.* *Iſaac* told juſt ſuch another Story, when he came with his Fair *Rebekah* to dwell in *Gerar*; and *Rebekah* drew *Jacob* into a Combination, to put a deliberate Lye upon *Iſaac* in his old age, in their Intrigue to ſupplant *Eſau*. As for *Jacob*, how well he kept his Countenance and his Tale, the Succeſs ſhew'd; he made the Cheat, deſperate and groſs as it was, go down with the dark old Man whether he would or no: He came ſo compleatly furniſh'd for forcing the Deceit upon him, that the Lye ſat rough, not only upon his Tongue, but on his Hands, and about his Neck; the venerable *Sire* not only heard, but felt it, and how confidently and ſturdily did he ſtand it out to the laſt? *Art thou my very Son Eſau?* and he ſaid, *I am.*

And now, what effect ſuch Precedents as theſe may have upon unwary Minds, it being in a Matter about which Men are prone to be miſled, is but too obvious: Many think that any thing they read remarkable in the Character of a Great Perſon in Sacred Sto-

ry, is written for their Imitation Right or Wrong: and who could wiſh to be more colourably juſtified in what they do, than to have the Example and Authority of the moſt Holy *Patriarchs* to bear them out?

But come near, and there is little true ſhelter for Lying under the ſhadow of this Pretence. I know ſome have attempted to bring off *Abraham* clear; for he gave out that *Sarai* was his Siſter, and ſo in truth ſhe was: And the *Patriarch* himſelf laid ſo much ſtreſs upon this, that he gave it to *Sarai* for her conſtant Story: *This is thy Kindneſs which thou ſhalt ſhew me, at every Place whither we ſhall come, ſay of me, he is my Brother:* And this Artifice they plaid over again with *Abimelech*; and when he came to charge it home upon *Abraham* in theſe Words, *what ſayeſt thou that thou haſt done this Thing?* In Truth he had little to ſay, but only that there was ſome Foundation for ſuch a Tale too, tho' it was far enough from being the thing which it mainly concern'd him to ſpeak out. Said he, *And yet indeed ſhe is my Siſter, ſhe is the Daughter of my Father, but not the Daughter of my Mother; and ſhe became my Wife.* Now upon this we may remark two Things: Firſt, that this was a meer *Mental Reſervation* in *Abraham*, with the remoteſt Account only expreſs'd, on purpoſe to conceal the principal Thing in Demand: For by ſaying ſhe was his Siſter, he deſign'd to make believe ſhe was not his Wife: Which comes up cloſe to the guilt of a Lye Next I obſerve, that *Abimelech* himſelf, tho' an Alien from the People of God, did yet, from the pure Reaſon

of

of the Thing, impute this Prevarication to *Abraham* as Evil, and that with ſome Warmth and Reſentment. *Abimelech call'd Abraham, and ſaid what haſt thou done unto us? And what have I offended thee, that thou haſt brought upon me and my Kingdom a great Sin? Thou haſt done Deeds that ought not to be done.* And if it was unqueſtionably ſinful in *Abraham*, beſure the ſame was ſo in *Iſaac*; for he had not ſo much as a double Meaning to bring him off. Then, as for the Plot of *Jacob* and *Rebekah*, there was in the Management of that ſo much Deliberate Deceit and Lying, that 'tis in vain to think of Colouring or Sweetning away the Guilt of it, by any favourable Interpretation.

And now what is moſt natural for us to remark and infer from ſuch Caſes as theſe? Shall we take Heart from them and ſay, Surely if thoſe Ancient Worthies in Religion, ſo renowned and recorded for their Piety in the Word of God, did yet upon Occaſion Indulge themſelves to Lye, much more may we, after ſuch great Examples, and be innocent? But I ſay, God forbid! the Juſteſt and Holieſt Men that ever liv'd, can give no warrantable Authority from their Practice, to make any thing Lawful, which in it ſelf is Sinful. No, but if we have no mind to part with ſuch Inſtances without ſome Animadverſion, we may reflect upon them after this Manner. Well, I ſee the greateſt and beſt of Men have now and then had their Failings; and how wondrous ſincere has the Sacred Hiſtory been, in not Diſſembling and Concealing them? but ſurely it has given us

their Lives juſt as they were, with no leſs intent that we ſhould avoid what was blameable in them, than that we ſhould follow them in what was praiſe Worthy: For to copy after ſuch Originals Right or Wrong, would be an indiſcreet and ſervile Imitation: But if we are reſolv'd that Lying muſt ſometimes be allowable, becauſe of theſe Inſtances, we had as good infer that it is Lawful and Expedient at any time, for a Man to ſave himſelf harmleſs by putting his Wife in harms way, to wink at her Converſation with other Men, rather than run a riſque in keeping up his Claim to her; we ought to beware how we draw Precedents into Precept; we may be forced to bring away more Circumſtances along with them than are for our turn. But waving ſuch perverſe Concluſions as theſe, let it ſuffice abundantly, that thoſe ſlips of the Holy and Good Men of Old are not told for our Imitation; in *that* the Sacred Text is far enough from Recommending them, by any the leaſt Approbation: On the contrary *Abimelech* ſeverely reproves *Abraham* for his Inſincerity; and *Jacob* was ſarcaſtically upbraided by his Brother *Eſaw*, when he thus compares the Property of his Name and Actions together; *Is he not rightly call'd Jacob, for he hath ſupplanted me theſe two Times.*

Well, but what then ſhall we reply to the Caſe of *Rahab*, and of the *Hebrew Midwives?* for ſomething is expreſly ſaid to Juſtifie and Commend them for what they did, inſomuch that ſome have taken Notice, how warmly the *Fathers* have improv'd the hint, they

they applaud them with a perfect Rapture; *O magnum humanitatis ingenium! O pium pro salute mendacium!* said St. *Austin* of the Midwives: Tho, by the way, that Father should above all others have spar'd his Extasie, because he maintains that side of the Question I am contending for, that Lying is absolutely disallowable and evil: Ὦ καλῶ ψεύδους! ὦ καλῶ δόλου οὐ προδιδόντος τὰ θεῖα! said *Chrysostom* of *Rahab*: And this was much more pardonable in him, because more consistent with his Principle; for he is rankt among those, who, in special Cases, give allowance for Lying; tho' still 'tis something particular, to have a Man's Practice more correct than his Doctrine; for 'tis confidently said of that *Father*, that, from his Baptism to his Death, he could not charge himself with the guilt of one wilful Lye.

However, I must own the Objection, supported by such Authorities, looks troublesome enough; there is a good Appearance of Weight and Force in it; nevertheless it is not I think unanswerable; it may drive us to a Distinction, but not to Silence. For, upon Examination we shall find, it was not specially the Lye, but the Faith, and Fear, and Zeal, of those good Women, which God respected. Thus when *Rahab* hid the *Messengers* of the Lord, and sent the *Searchers* off by a false Direction; the thing remarkable to her Praise, was the firm Belief she had that God was with *Israel*, and her wishing well to the Cause which Heaven espous'd: Which in a Harlot was somewhat Extraordinary. And therefore when the Author to

the *Hebrews* recognizeth her particular Merit, he does not ſay, *Rahab* the Harlot was ſaved by *Lying*; but, *by Faith Rahab the Harlot periſhed not.* Nay when St. *James* undertakes to ſay, *Rahab the Harlot was juſtified by Works*; he only makes mention of her receiving the Meſſengers, and how ſhe ſent them out another way; but takes no Notice of the Lye, by which ſhe deluded the *Purſuers.* Surely it was not for nothing that he thought fit to let that Circumſtance alone, which if it would have born Commendation, was the moſt notable part of the Story. As for the *Midwives*, herein conſiſted their peculiar Praiſe: *But the Midwives feared God, and did not as the King of Egypt commanded them, but ſaved the Children alive.* They dreaded to offend God and Nature, beyond all the Threats and Vengeance of an Earthly Tyrant; and it is for *this* their Recompence is expreſs'd; *Becauſe the Midwives feared God, he made them Houſes*; that is, proſper'd them in their outward State. Indeed after *Pharaoh* found them out, and began to rally them, they pretended this plauſible Excuſe; *The Hebrew Women are not like the Egyptians, for they are lively, and are deliver'd e're the Midwives come in unto them*: And then I confeſs it immediately follows, *Therefore God dealt well with the Midwives*; but ſtill this may fairly be allow'd to relate to the Integrity of their End, not ſo much to the laudableneſs of the Means; not *therefore*, becauſe they put the *Egyptian* off with a *Lye*, but *therefore*

fore, becauſe they perſevered in their Reſolutions to ſave the Children, *and feared God.*

And there are ſome things peculiarly conſiderable, why God ſhould think fit to give them Commendation in the Main for what they did, without being ſevere with them for one indirect Expedient. For firſt, It is highly probable thoſe ignorant Women might not be ſo Caſuiſtically aware of the ſimple indiſpenſible Evil of Lying; but provided they could do a world of Good by it, they might be verily perſwaded in their Conſciences they ought to Lye. There is room, I ſay, to ſuppoſe this; for many ſenſible Men will hardly be beat out of the ſame Fancy to this very Day; and if that was in Truth the firm Perſwaſion of their Conſciences, then they had been to blame if they had not done juſt as they did. Beſides, the Caſe was very Urgent and Deſperate; they muſt either be concern'd in a conſtant courſe of pitileſs inhuman Murthers, or elſe try the chance of preventing the horrid Deſolation, by prevaricating with the Tyrant; and why might not the wiſdom of Providence think fit to connive at a wholſome, well-meant Error, ariſing from Ignorance; and for the Innocence and Goodneſs of the Intention, overlook a little Indirectneſs in the Means? if they thought it no Sin to falſifie with ſuch a bloody Wretch, when they could do ſuch admirable Service by it, and give ſuch convincing Demonſtrations of their Faith and Fear, why might not God take the whole together for well done; and, for the ſake of that which

was egregiously design'd, pass over one Circumstance in it that might otherwise admit of some Censure? a towardly Disposition is of it self very commendable; and God, when he observes ignorant People, truly Upright and Sincere in their Purposes, will, we trust, mercifully accept them with all their Failings; and pass over many little Obliquities and Imperfections in their Measures; but after all, he never intended this should be drawn into Example; and the Failing by being winkt at be mistaken for a Vertue.

I confess *Grotius* tells us of a certain Rule for expounding of Scripture, which *Irenæus* learn'd of an Ancient *Presbyter*, which, if true, would keep us still ravel'd and perplext. * *De quibus Scripturæ non increpant, sed simpliciter sunt positæ, nos non debere fieri accusatores*: i. e. "In Cases where the Word of God "reflects no blame, but gives them simply "related, it is none of our Business to set up "for Accusers. But this, tho' it may often hold true, is no general Rule; for what express Blame is reflected upon *Achitophel's* hanging himself? and yet who doubts whether *Self-murther* be a Sin or no? But we may turn it to a general Rule another way, and affirm, that it never holds true in any Case, if the same shall be found forbidden and condemn'd in other Places of Scripture; which in truth is the Case in Hand: For we find Lying so constantly and absolutely prohibited in Scripture, that we cannot think it wholly

* De Jur. l. 3. Annot. §. 9.

wholly Innocent in thoſe ſpecial Inſtances above, altho', for ſome peculiar Circumſtances in them, the Divine Spirit is pleas'd to paſs them over, without any poſitive Cenſure or Blame.

But, if I miſtake not, there is one effectual way yet behind, to demonſtrate, that it could not be the deſign of the Holy Text, by being ſilent in thoſe Paſſages, to juſtifie and applaud the Lye: For let us for the purpoſe ſuppoſe that the ſame Women had ſtood reſolute and inflexible in their Deſigns without any Prevarication at all, and ventur'd their Lives both for the Cauſes they eſpous'd, and for the Truth at the ſame time. Suppoſe then that *Rahab* had come out to the *Purſuers* with the *Prelate* of *Tagaſta*'s Anſwer, *That ſhe could not tell a Lye to deny the Men, and that ſhe would not ſpeak out to betray them*: Likewiſe that the *Midwives* had told *Pharaoh* to his Face, that they could not in Pity and Conſcience deſtroy the Babes; and therefore they were reſolv'd to ſave them tho' they died for it. Would not this have look'd exceeding commendable and brave? had they not been gallant *Confeſſors* and *Heroines* for the Cauſe of God? and can we think the Spirit of God would have omitted to extol them to the Higheſt for ſuch a try'd Integrity? ſurely then it is impoſſible that Sincerity and Unſincerity, that Guile and open Dealing, that Truth and Lying, ſhould be both laudable and meritorious at the ſame Time, and about the ſame Thing. God can do any thing but reconcile Contradictions; we may therefore conclude he did not direct his Approbation

probation in thoſe Caſes to the Lye, but was pleas'd to connive at a little Ignorance and Obliquity in the Means, when their ends were ſo exceeding Great and Good.

And ſuch a Connivance cannot be thought Strange, if we duly conſider that, as there is a vaſt Difference between the Purity and Perfection of the Law, and of the Goſpel, ſo there is, likewiſe, as to the Purity and Perfection *they* require in Mens Lives; many things were tolerated and wink'd at in the old Law, not becauſe they were altogether Innocent, but in Compliance with the Blindneſs and Hardneſs of Mens Hearts, as in the Caſes of *Retaliation*, *Divorce*, and the like; which Points are, by the Clearer and Purer Light of the Goſpel, ſhewn to be directly diſallowable and ſinful; and accordingly, thoſe Men and things would paſs for Extraordinary then, which under the Chriſtian Oeconomy we are taught to have another Opinion of. And I muſt do *Grotius* the Juſtice to Acknowledge, that this was his Remark particularly in reſpect to Lying, and eſpecially in reference to the Caſe of *Rahab*; * *laudatur hoc factum ut illi tempori congruens*: "the "Stratagem was applauded, only in Reſpect "to the Time in which it was done: In the Goſpel Days it would hardly have ſtood the Teſt, for to Chriſtians our Lord has declar'd in general Terms, *That unleſs your Righteouſneſs ſhall exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom*

* Annot. ad Heb. xi. 31.

Kingdom of Heaven: That is, it will require a much ſtricter Sence and Practice of Vertue to be a Diſciple of Chriſt, than what was ſeemingly expected from a Diſciple of *Moſes*; and I do not know if I may not apply that, in a particular Manner, to the Caſe before us; for where do we find throughout the new Teſtament, any ſuch connivances at Lying, even upon the deſperateſt Emergencies? thoſe few Cavils that have been made, will but advance the Credit and Obligation of Truth, and ſerve the more effectually to diſcourage and ſhame all Lying.

1ſt. In Reference to *Chriſt* himſelf; the moſt officious and ſpightful Search could never find above one or two Caſes, wherein his Words and Mind could be brought to the leaſt Suſpicion of Inconſiſtency; nor is there any tolerable Reaſon for Objecting thoſe; but when Men are reſolv'd to find what they look for, in Places where it is not dropt; they muſt be content to take up any thing that comes neareſt in Reſemblance, and ſay, *that's it.*

In the firſt Place then it is produced, that our Lord ſhould ſay, concerning the laſt Judgment, *But of that Day and that Hour knoweth no Man, no not the Son.* Now how could that be true, when he was *God* as well as Man? But I ſay, can any of us poſitively tell what the Son did, or did not know better than himſelf? methinks in Modeſty this ſhould be ſufficient. But farther, the *Son* had two diſtinct Natures; he was Man as well as God; and when he ſpoke of the *Son*, he

he often meant with ſpecial Regard to his own Human Nature; and can we be confident that he muſt needs know every thing as *Man*, which he knew diſtinctly as *God*? there is no more Neceſſity to ſuppoſe that his *Manhood* was advanced up to all the Perfections of his *Godhead*; than that his *Godhead* underwent all the Infirmities of his *Manhood*; they were no doubt as intimately united, as two ſuch remote and different Natures could well be, and yet 'tis not unlikely, ſo much Diſtance continued between them ſtill, that the God might know many Things, which the *Man* did not. St. *Luke* tells us, *that Jeſus*, as he grew up, *increaſed in Wiſdom as well as Stature:* Now to increaſe in Wiſdom, is to know more Things than we underſtood before; the Son therefore as Man, might, without any Diſparagement to that part of his Character, be ſuppos'd Ignorant of ſome Things; and it was expedient that he ſhould appear ſo, the more effectually to convince us that he was Man; for that is a ſort of token by which human Nature is too evidently known and diſtinguiſh'd from the Divine: And if the Son might be ſuppos'd Ignorant of any thing at all, it ſhould likely be of that, which was the profoundeſt Secret of Heaven; which the Angels themſelves were not ſuffer'd to know, and which *the Father kept cloſe in his own Boſom.*

Another exception is taken at his *Pretence* of parting from his Company at *Emmaus*, when in truth he did not: St. *Luke* ſays, *he made as tho' he would have gone further*; which, the

Criticks

Criticks ſay, is ill rendered; the words are--- προσεποιείτω πορρώτερω πορεύεσθαι, *he made an attempt to go farther*, and where was the falſehood or diſſimulation of this? Why, he went in with them for all that. Well! and might not the importunities of his Company be allowed to make him change his purpoſe? It ſhewed that he was ſerious in his offer to paſs on, becauſe they were forced to be very preſſing with him to ſtay; *they conſtrained him, ſaying, The day is far ſpent*; they urged the inconvenience of venturing forward ſo late. Now our Saviour's natural temper is no where repreſented Moroſe, Humourſome, and Inflexible; on the contrary, being a Man of a free obliging converſation, and willing to cloſe with all fair occaſions of promoting the great and weighty buſineſs he came down to do, he was prevailed upon to accept their civil invitation: But let us take it in the worſt and croſſeſt manner, it would have looked undecent and rude, for a ſtranger to have thruſt in with them before he was asked, and it does not appear they began to ask him 'till he made his offer to be gone.

I confeſs there is one inſtance more objected in the Character of Chriſt, which I have touched upon already; it is what you read toward the latter end of *John* ii. There the Jews are ſaid to demand a *Sign* of him, to which he thus reply'd, *Deſtroy this Temple, and in three days I will raiſe it up*; he ſpoke, 'tis like in ſuch a manner, as that the Jews might apprehend he meant the *great Temple*, as appears by their aſtoniſhment at the Propoſal; *Forty and Six Years was this Temple in Building*,

Building, and wilt thou rear it up in three Days? But St. *John* says, *he spoke of the Temple of his Body*; that is, say the Objectors, he Spoke of one thing, and meant another. But now, I cannot see what necessity there is of any other reply than this, That, take his words either way, he said no more, than what he had power to make good; and in the sence he intended, he made them good to the very letter. He was able to perform what he had undertook, let them understand him which way they would, for, he that was at the Creating of the World out of *Choas* in six days, could, with ease, have reared up the Temple out of *Ruins* in three days. But he being chiefly Prophetical in his answer, promising them another guess Sign than what surpriz'd them from the literal sence of his words, toward which because their obstinate infidelity should principally contribute, it was not therefore expedient that he should at that time explain to them the full reach and end of his words; it was sufficient that in due season they should find them exactly verified. Now, I am thinking, with what an upright and sincere Character our Lord comes represented to us, upon whom no more, nor greater instances of Falsehood or disingenuity can be charged, thro' the whole course of his Life.

But 'tis said St. *Paul* lies a little obnoxious by his own confession: For being reprimanded for reviling God's *High-Priest*, he reply'd, *That he wist not that he was the High-Priest*: Which, say they, he could not choose but know, being brought before him as a Criminal. Now suppose it should be granted, what

what nevertheleſs was far from being true, that once in his Life, being hard preſs'd and daunted, he did tell a Lye; what would this avail to Authorize and Sanctifie the Sin? For, example while the Holy Spirit was actually dictating in them, which was not always, the Apoſtles where fallible and frail like other good Men: But there are ſo many ways in which his words may be very naturally taken, clear of all unſincerity, that we muſt be rudely and barbarouſly ſevere upon him, to determine ſuch an Anſwer for a Lye. For,

He might continue to Speak by way of Indignation, as he did before, at the proceedings of *Ananias*; as if he ſhould have reply'd, *I have little reaſon to take and regard a Man, who behaves himſelf as he does, for Gods High-Prieſt.* Or, the Apoſtle might mean in plain terms to diſown him for *High-Prieſt*, and that very juſtly; for in truth he was not the *legal* High-Prieſt, but one who by bribery and violence uſurped the Dignity which of right belonged at that time to another; *Iſhmael*, or *Joſephus*; for ſo we are told in Hiſtory; and in this ſence, to ſay, *he wiſt not that he was the High-Prieſt*, was true enough. Or, it may be very poſſible that St. *Paul*, being at that inſtant ruminating another way, might hear the voice of ſome one from the Bench, commanding him to be ſmitten, and not apprehend the right Perſon who gave the command; there being at that time ſeveral Prieſts and Elders ſitting in Court, and ſo, by miſtaking it for one of the *puny Prieſts*, he might be provoked to return that language

which

which, it may be, he would not have given to the *Chief-Prieſt* himſelf; and this way the ſence is eaſy and natural; for thus, having returned this warm remonſtrance againſt him who ordered the blow, *God ſhall ſmite thee thou whited wall*; and ſome, upon this, taking him up ſhort, *revileſt thou God's High-Prieſt*? Do you know who you Speak to? He being by this made ſenſible that he had miſtook his Man, recollects himſelf, and Anſwers thus diſcreetly and ſoberly; *why, truly no! I wiſt not Brethren*, or I did not think, *that it was the High-Prieſt*, that commanded me to be ſmitten; for if I had, as great as the provocation was, I ſhould not have reply'd in ſuch a manner; *for it is written, thou ſhalt not Speak Evil of the Ruler of thy People.* The beſt * Criticks take him this way; and are ſo confident in it, that they ſay, to make a doubt of ſo clear a Caſe, is *to ſeek a knot in a Bulruſh.* Or, if nothing of all this will give content, the moſt and the worſt that can be made of it is this, that the Apoſtle might be ſenſible his firſt reflection was a little without the rules of *decorum*; and being reprehended for it, now, upon cool and ſecond thoughts, he might return to himſelf, and own it was unadviſedly and raſhly reply'd; *I wiſt not Brethren that he was the High-Prieſt:* I was haſty, and did not duly conſider the Character of the Perſon I ſpoke to. But I appeal to any Man of common ſence, whether he can ſuppoſe this abſurdity of

* Le Clerc.

of St. *Paul*, or would think it probable of a much meaner Man, that he ſhould ſtand a Priſoner at the Bar, and look the *Chief Judge* in the face, and both ſee and know who he was, and yet have the impudence to declare in open Court, that he did not imagine ſuch a one was the Chief Judge; and without this, let us make what we will of it, we cannot turn it to a Lye.

Theſe inſtances I hope I have accounted for, clear of all Lying; and then I may challenge any Man to find out one ſingle caſe beſide, wherein either our Lord, or any of his Apoſtles after him, are once taken in ſaying any thing, that looks or ſounds with the leaſt Reſemblance of a Lye; And, if ſo, 'tis no great ſtay to the Sin, if any ſlips of this kind were obſerv'd in the Perſons of *old time:* We are *Chriſtians*, *Jeſus* is our *Pattern*, and the *Goſpel* our *Law*; both the *Guide*, and the *Covenant* of our Lives are incomparably more Pure and Perfect: And therefore, if we pretend to take our Meaſures of Living after *them*, we muſt reſolve that our Lives ſhall be ſo too.

But the niceſt Difficulty ſtill remains, which is, to account for the Liberties of this Kind, which God himſelf may ſeem to have taken in his *own Words*; whoſe *Veracity*, nevertheleſs, muſt be allow'd ſo *Sacred*, and his *Truth* ſo *Inviolable*, that, tho' we ſhould find our ſelves *poſed* in ſome Particulars, we muſt not impute any thing like *Unſincerity* to *him*, but all to our own Ignorance; and reſolve, that we *Let God be true, tho' every Man a Lyar.* The mean while, I do not deſpair to

lay

lay down ſuch plain Diſtinctions and Rules, as will help every ſenſible and honeſt Man to give himſelf Satisfaction, as touching God's Veracity, in whatſoever may ſeem liable to Exception in his Holy Word. And, in order hereunto,

As we may reduce all Paſſages of this ſort under one of theſe three Heads, namely, ſuch as reſpect, either his plain *Narrations* and Dictates, or his Promiſes and Threats for *Diſcipline*, or his Peremptory Denunciations againſt Impenitents for *Judgment*, ſo we may, with theſe three Correſponding Rules, reſolve all Difficulties and Objections that can be raiſed, in Relation thereunto. I will not be poſitive, they ſhall give Satisfaction to all who delight in being Sceptical; but, I am ſure, I take intire Satisfaction from them my ſelf. That is to ſay,

Firſt, As to all the plain *Narrations* and *Dictates* of God in Scripture, which may ſeem to impeach his Veracity, this muſt be our Rule, That we underſtand him by that known *Hebrew Mode* or *Idiom*, of expreſſing *Permiſſions* in the Nature and Style of *Commands*.

Secondly, As to all his Promiſes and Threats for the ſake of *Diſcipline*, our Rule muſt be, That we underſtand him as ſpeaking *Conditionally*: For ſo *they* muſt needs be deſign'd, if they are not ſo expreſs'd.

Laſtly, As to all his Peremptory Denunciations of *Judgment*, againſt Impenitent and Incor-

Incorrigible Men, we muſt conclude, That his *Truth*, and *Veracity* will engage him to put them in Execution.

Now, That theſe plain Diſtinctions amd Rules will anſwer all Difficulties, and untye all Knots, that God's Word, in any Paſſage, may ſeem to be perplext and entangled with, will appear, as oft as we come to prove them by Examples. For Inſtance,

1. In reſpect to the plain *Narrations* and *Dictates* of God's Word, I look upon that to be one of the moſt exceptionable and ſhocking Paſſages, where, when the Lord is firſt Repreſented to have ſaid, * *Who ſhall perſwade* Ahab, *that he may go up and fall at* Ramoth Gilead? It follows, that "There "came forth a Spirit, and ſtood before the "Lord, and ſaid, I will perſwade him: And "the Lord ſaid unto him wherewith? And "he ſaid, I will go forth, and I will be a "*Lying Spirit* in the Mouth of all his Pro-"phets: And he ſaid, *thou ſhalt perſwade* "*him, and prevail alſo; Go forth, and do ſo.* "Now therefore behold, *the Lord hath put a* "*Lying Spirit* in the Mouth of theſe thy (*viz.* "*Ahab*'s) Prophets, and the Lord hath ſpok-"en evil concerning thee.

Now, to unravel this Difficulty by the proper Rule given, It is obvious at Sight, that this was not deſign'd for a *Narrative* of what had *really* happen'd, as if any ſuch Conſultation had been held by the Lord, who ſhould

* 1 Kings 22. 20, &c.

ſhould go forth and deceive *Ahab*; but only for a *Repreſentation*, to bring down inviſible and myſterious Things to the fancies of Men; Nor, of Conſequence, that any ſuch Spirit did ſtep out, and offer himſelf to God for that Service; but only, that there are evil Spirits always ready, and able to entice, and belye Men to their Deſtruction, as the Serpent did Eve, if the Lord doth not prevent and hinder them: And therefore, That when the Lord is repreſented to ſay *Go forth, and do ſo*; no more is meant but, that the Lord did not interpoſe to reſtrain the Lying Spirit, but *permitted* him to work his Ends on that wicked King: And, to ſhow that this was not done by any *Inſpiration* proceeding directly from God, it is to be obſerv'd, that this *Spirit* did not enter and act in any of the *Lord*'s Prophets, but was a *Lying Spirit* in the Mouth of *Ahab*'s Wizzards. And therefore to diſtinguiſh the true and proper dictate of the Lord, in this Matter, from the falſe Inſinuations of the Devil, it is expreſly ſaid, at the cloſe of all, *that the Lord had ſpoken Evil concerning Ahab:* And the Evil which he propheſied, by *Michaiah*, fell out as it was foretold. From all which it is evident, that this Viſion runs altogether upon that *Hebraſm*, of putting the *Imperative* for the *Potential*; in which when it it ſeems to *Direct* and *Command*, it means no more than a bare *Sufferance*, and *Permiſſion*; The ſame *Permiſſion* wherewith God endures all other Forgery, Lying, and Perfidiouſneſs, which the perverſe wills of Devils and of Diabolical Men, delight in being Guilty of.

And

And having as I perſwade my ſelf, fairly clear'd away the Difficulty, which this Paſſage might ſeem to labour under, I ſhall not need to make Example of any more of this ſort, becauſe I do not know of any other in the whole Bible, but what will more eaſily take the ſame Anſwer. But,

2. As to all God's Promiſes and Threats for the ſake of *Diſcipline*, (which includes moſt of thoſe in Scripture that are of a *Temporal* Conſideration) the very Nature of them does ſuppoſe, that he promiſes on *Condition* that we obey, and Threatens *in caſe* we continue Diſobedient: And this with all imaginable Security to his *Faithfulneſs* and *Truth*, tho' he expreſs himſelf in Terms that are ever ſo Poſitive, and Unconditional. The Divine Spirit is often very peremptory in Declarations of this Kind, the better to awaken and rouſe Men out of their Security, and Preſumption; but they would ceaſe to carry the pretence of *Diſcipline*, and be no longer warnings for our *Amendment*, if their events were to follow without any Reſpect to our Reformation, and we were to fare neither the better nor the worſe, for any Change they made in the Conduct of our Lives. And to ſhow, according to the Second Rule given, That the Condition is ever imply'd and underſtood, how abſolutely ſoever they are expreſs'd, I ſhall give a ſingle Inſtance in each Kind, which you will find to have been as Poſitive and Peremptory, as any Promiſe or Threatning could be made by Words; and yet, each receded from by God, without the leaſt

ſhould go forth and deceive *Ahab*; but only for a *Repreſentation*, to bring down inviſible and myſterious Things to the fancies of Men; Nor, of Conſequence, that any ſuch Spirit did ſtep out, and offer himſelf to God for that Service; but only, that there are evil Spirits always ready, and able to entice, and belye Men to their Deſtruction, as the Serpent did Eve, if the Lord doth not prevent and hinder them: And therefore, That when the Lord is repreſented to ſay *Go forth, and do ſo*; no more is meant but, that the Lord did not interpoſe to reſtrain the Lying Spirit, but *permitted* him to work his Ends on that wicked King: And, to ſhow that this was not done by any *Inſpiration* proceeding directly from God, it is to be obſerv'd, that this *Spirit* did not enter and act in any of the *Lord*'s Prophets, but was a *Lying Spirit* in the Mouth of *Ahab*'s Wizzards. And therefore to diſtinguiſh the true and proper dictate of the Lord, in this Matter, from the falſe Inſinuations of the Devil, it is expreſly ſaid, at the cloſe of all, *that the Lord had ſpoken Evil concerning Ahab:* And the Evil which he propheſied, by *Michaiah*, fell out as it was foretold. From all which it is evident, that this Viſion runs altogether upon that *Hebraſm*, of putting the *Imperative* for the *Potential*; in which when it it ſeems to *Direct* and *Command*, it means no more than a bare *Sufferance*, and *Permiſſion*; The ſame *Permiſſion* wherewith God endures all other Forgery, Lying, and Perfidiouſneſs, which the perverſe wills of Devils and of Diabolical Men, delight in being Guilty of.

And

And having as I perſwade my ſelf, fairly clear'd away the Difficulty, which this Paſſage might ſeem to labour under, I ſhall not need to make Example of any more of this ſort, becauſe I do not know of any other in the whole Bible, but what will more eaſily take the ſame Anſwer. But,

2. As to all God's Promiſes and Threats for the ſake of *Diſcipline*, (which includes moſt of thoſe in Scripture that are of a *Temporal* Conſideration) the very Nature of them does ſuppoſe, that he promiſes on *Condition* that we obey, and Threatens *in caſe* we continue Diſobedient: And this with all imaginable Security to his *Faithfulneſs* and *Truth*, tho' he expreſs himſelf in Terms that are ever ſo Poſitive, and Unconditional. The Divine Spirit is often very peremptory in Declarations of this Kind, the better to awaken and rouſe Men out of their Security, and Preſumption; but they would ceaſe to carry the pretence of *Diſcipline*, and be no longer warnings for our *Amendment*, if their events were to follow without any Reſpect to our Reformation, and we were to fare neither the better nor the worſe, for any Change they made in the Conduct of our Lives. And to ſhow, according to the Second Rule given, That the Condition is ever imply'd and underſtood, how abſolutely ſoever they are expreſs'd, I ſhall give a ſingle Inſtance in each Kind, which you will find to have been as Poſitive and Peremptory, as any Promiſe or Threatning could be made by Words; and yet, each receded from by God, without the leaſt

leaſt blemiſh upon his Truth and Veracity, becauſe the tacit Conditions were remov'd, upon which they were to take Effect.

Thus; What Promiſe could be more plain and poſitive in Terms, than that which God made to *Abram*, ſaying, * *Unto thy Seed have I given this Land, from the River of* Egypt *to the great River, the River* Euphrates. And yet, after *Joſhua* had ended all his Conqueſts, it is ſaid, † *that there remained yet very much of the Land to be poſſeſſed:* That is, ſay the Objectors, there remained very much of God's poſitive Aſſurance, yet unfulfilled: But then, turn forward in the Sacred Hiſtory, relating to that Affair, and you will read the Truth of God thus vindicated, in that ſeeming Inconſiſtency: * "And the Anger of the Lord "was hot againſt *Iſrael*, and he ſaid, becauſe "that this People hath tranſgreſſed my Co-"venant, which I commanded their Fathers, "and have not hearkened unto my Voice, I "alſo will not, henceforth, drive out any "from before them of the Nations, which "*Joſhua* left when he dyed. Which was the ſame, in effect, as if he had ſaid, I will not hold my ſelf obliged to make good the full of what I promiſed to my People, becauſe they, on their Parts, have utterly fail'd of Performing that tacit Condition, ſuppos'd and imply'd, tho' not expreſſed therein, upon which it was to be fulfilled.

In like manner; What Threatning could be more Abſolute and Peremptory, than that againſt

* Gen. 15. 18. † Joſ. 31. 1. * Jud. 2. 20 21.

againſt Nineveh? * *Yet Fourty Days, and* Nineveh *ſhall be Overthrown*! A ſentence ſo Peremptory, and Irreverſible, in the Opinion of the Prophet himſelf who Denounced it, that he was perfectly Chagrin, and Sullen, that it was not Executed, becauſe it ſeemed to leave him under the Cenſure of a falſe Prophet, and Lyar. And yet, it plainly appear'd in the Sequel, that the threatning, how poſitively ſoever delivered, that it might be the more Powerful and Affecting, carry'd this reſerve along with it, as virtually as if it had been Spoken out in ſo many Words, *If* Nineveh *does not take warning, and Repent*; **Yet Forty Days and** Nineveh **ſhall be Overthrown.** So that, as a Threat for *Diſcipline*, it was expreſſed the more Peremptory, not that it might be put in Execution, but rather, if poſſible, that it might not: For the People no ſooner repented, but † *God ſaw their Works, that they turned from their Evil way, and God repented of the Evil that he ſaid that he would do unto them, and he did it not.*

And leaſt this way of concealing the Condition, in ſuch Poſitive Threatnings, ſhould look like Mental Reſervation; If I anſwer enough to this, that the Threatned do, generally take, and underſtand the Condition to be implyed, all one as if it were Spoken out: Inſomuch that though *Jonah* ſeemed Surpriſed, and Diſcontented, the Ninevites, Silly and Senſeleſs as they were, that they ſcarce *knew their Right Hand from their Left*, had yet

* Jonah 3. 4. † V. 10.

common Judgment enough to apprehend, that the Sentence was Conditional, and no otherwise than a Solemn warning and Admonition, that they might prevent the fatal Blow. They thought aright, that God would not have sent an Alarm beforehand, if it had been too late; Nor did they Repent and Humble themselves in the most Devout and exemplary manner, but in hopes, upon that Condition, to get the dreadful sentence reversed: For, said they, * *Who can tell if God will turn and Repent, and turn away from his fierce Anger, that we Perish not?*

The same Construction that God himself has put upon his own positive Promises, we may, with equal reason, (changing the Terms) apply to his most Peremptory Threatnings: For, let the business be worded how it will, he tells you, it is ever with a tacit and supposed Provision: † *And this shall come to Pass, if ye diligently Obey the Voice of the Lord your God.* And therefore, by another of his Prophets, he has unfolded himself more distinctly, and evidently, both in relation to his Threats, and Promises, in the same place. "* At "what Instant I shall Speak concerning a "Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to "pluck up, and to pull down, and to Destroy "it; *If that Nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their Evil, I will Repent "of the Evil that I thought to do unto them:* "And at what Instant I shall Speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, "to

* V. 9. † Zech. 6. 15. * Jer. 18. 9. 10.

" to Build, and to Plant it; *If it do Evil in* " *my ſight, that it Obey not my Voice, then I* " *will repent of the good wherewith I ſaid I* " *would benefit them.*

And here, we have a fair opportunity to obſerve, in what ſenſe we are to take that Phraſe, of *God's repenting*, ſo frequent in his own Word; *God is not a Man, that he ſhould repent:* That is, he does not repent as a Man does; who, when he repents of what he has ſaid, departs from his Word, and his Purpoſe too: But, when God is pleaſed, in Condeſcention to our Weakneſs, to talk of *Repenting*, it implies no change, either in his purpoſe, or Declaration; but only, that he does not cauſe the event to follow, juſt according to the exact Terms in which he expreſſed himſelf, but according as the condition implyed either is, or is not performed: And all his Declarations, in the way of Diſcipline, being both intended and underſtood to be tacitly Conditional, he is free to repent, as it were, and alter with the Condition, without the leaſt Reflection upon his veracity, or Immutability: And in this Senſe, and by ſuch ways as theſe it is, that we are to Underſtand and Interpret God, when he ſays, * *And ye ſhall know my Breach of Promiſe.*

3. As to all his Peremptory denunciations for Judgment, againſt Impenitent and Incorrigible Sinners, God will find himſelf Bound, by his Inviolable Truth and Veracity, to ſee

* Num. 14 34.

them put in Execution: For, in *theſe* there can be no condition ſuppoſed or Underſtood, that can make any alteration in the event, ſeeing no change or alteration is expected, in the lives of thoſe againſt whom they are Pronounced: Theſe are not Threatnings for *Diſcipline*, but Predictions for *Judgment*: And, as Incorrigible and Reprobate-men are the Objects of them, the very nature of them ſuppoſes, that they ſhould be both Denounced by God, and underſtood by Men, as Sentences that are Unconditional, and Irreverſible: ſo that *there Remaineth no more, but a certain fearful looking for Judgment, and fiery Indignation*! I ſhall only make Examples of two, the moſt Remarkable caſes of this kind, the one of a Temporal, the other of an Eternal Concern; I mean, the Deſolation of the Reprobate *Jews*, and the Damnation of all Impenitent and Incorrigible Sinners; the former a glaring, and dreadful Type of the latter!

The Deſtruction of the *Jews* (that *Abomination of Deſolation*!) was thus foretold by our Lord, Excluſive of all Condition, or ſpace left for Repentance: Who, when he beheld their City, Wept over it, and ſaid; * *If thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy Peace*! but *now they are hid from thine Eyes*! *for the days* ſhall *come upon thee*, &c. In which Prediction, their day of Grace is repreſented to be overpaſſed, the means of their Preſervation to be removed, and hidden from them, and no Proviſion

* Luke 19. 42.

viſion left them, upon which it was poſſible they ſhould eſcape: Now, where the Sentence was no longer for *Diſcipline*, but for *Judgment*; and withal, ſo Peremptory, Unconditional, as to be Excluſive of all reſerve, it could not ſtand with the Truth, and Honour, and Immutability of the Juſt God to reverſe it.

The ſame, with much greater reaſon, is to be ſaid, of the many Solemn, Poſitive, and peremptory Sentences of everlaſting Miſery, to Impenitent, Reprobate-Men, in a State to come: Such as theſe; * *The wicked ſhall go away into everlaſting Puniſhment*: † *Depart from me, ye Curſed, into everlaſting Fire.* And, among other Damnable Sinners, * *All Lyars ſhall have their part, in the Lake which Burneth with Fire and Brimſtone, which is the Second Death.* If any Poſſibility of eſcape could be ſuppoſed, from ſuch abſolute Denunciations as theſe, it muſt be upon Condition alone, that the Sinners, thus Sentenced, would Repent and amend; but this only Condition is excluded, in the preſent caſe; for they are firſt ſuppoſed to be the Impenitent, and Incorrigible of Mankind againſt whom Eternal Vengeance is Decreed: So that, in ſuch Solemn Sentences and Predictions, where all Proviſoes and Reſerves are, either expreſly, or in the very nature of them debar'd, we muſt reſt perſuaded, that the purpoſes of Heaven are Unalterable, and Stedfaſt; that the Veracity of God will engage him to put them in Execution; and that, as he once declared, *the ſtrength of* Iſrael

* Matt. 25. 46. † V. 41. * Rev. 21. 8.

will not Lye, nor Repent: What it did perfectly well agree with his Goodness to Denounce, it will be most agreeable with his Truth, and Justice to see fulfilled.

To imagine otherwise of Gods Unconditional Predictions for Judgment, and particularly, of those that relate to the final and Eternal Judgment of Reprobates in a Future State, is to be more loose in our Notions of Gods Veracity and Truth, and, especially, of the Satisfaction that's due to his Justice and Honour, than the *Socinians* themselves: For the learned of them are generally agreed in this, * *That Gods Truth and Justice is concerned, in the Execution of all his Judiciary Sentences:* As may be Read at large, in *Bishop Stillingfleets* excellent *Discourse, concerning the Doctrine of Christ's Satisfaction.*

I do not forget how tedious I have been in clearing *Cases of Scripture*; but when I consider how necessary it is, that unsincere Men should be utterly dispossessed of that strong hold, I cannot tell how to repent of having been so particular; for the Word of God is, in it self, a very fair and Honourable plea, and will keep a Man in countenance who appeals to the authority of it; He may turn about and argue from thence with a good face; I had rather therefore offer a little too much, than any thing too little upon that part of the Controversie; for then, whatsoever pretences besides Men may have for the Sin of Lying, we are sure that, if the Bible will

* Socinus's words.

will not ſtand by them, nothing elſe can; *if God Condemn us, who is he that can juſtifie us?* After all, the Scriptures have been recurr'd to, more out of refuge, than any juſt encouragement to the Sin: Lyars fly to *Holy Writ*, as Criminals do to the *Church*; not as the pretence that led them to be Guilty, but as a Sanctuary to protect their Guilt; and there is no making them ſurrender to Conviction, 'till they are wrench'd *per force* from the *Horns of the Altar.*

3. The corrupt Maxims and Principles of *Politicians* have greatly countenanced Lying; they have taught it in the Education of Princes, preached and recommended it as a neceſſary device for wiſe and ſubtile Ruling, and made it a ſort of *underhandle* for turning the *Helm* of Government; hence Perſons of the *Top-moſt* Rank have receiv'd it into their manners; have learnt to like and reliſh it; and from them it has been rendered faſhionable, thro' all Degrees and Profeſſions downward; for the lower People not only take the *Modes* of their *Dreſs*, but of their very *Speech*, from the Examples of Quality; and as the Greetings, Addreſſes, Promiſes, and Apologies of Great Men are, for the moſt part, but a Courtly, plauſible ſort of Lying, ſo by way of Imitation, all Perſons who pretend to know the World, and to make any Figure in it, affect to diſtinguiſh themſelves by the ſame courſe of Accompliſhments, and to paſs for Men of Management and Dexterity, betake themſelves to the ſhallow, ſuperficial arts of cunning, diſſembling, and Lying.

Well, but to what purpoſe is this reflection? What expedient can reach up to the malady? Are Courtiers and Stateſmen to be reaſoned and rally'd out of diſſimulation? No, they muſt firſt be reaſoned and rally'd into a Principle, they muſt firſt learn to believe a God, or rather, not to reſiſt the Demonſtration of him, before they can ſtand in fear of offending him: and yet methinks the ſhining Precedent of a juſt and generous, and ſincere Soveraign overruling, ſhould oblige the truly *Noble* and *Illuſtrious* to rip the falſe *Tinſel* out of their Stars, cauſe every thing that is *Counterfeit* to look Childiſh and Ridiculous, and bring Honour up again to the good old Standard of Truth.

The mean while, we have great comfort that, on this ſide the Water, a Man is ſafe from ſuſpicion of *leſe-majeſty* to remark, that heretofore unſincerity was not thought ſuch a neceſſary and becoming ingredient in the Character of a *Great King*. I have ſome obſcure remembrance, that when *Socrates* undertook to form the Manners of *Alcibiades* for a Wiſe and Excellent Governor, he Counſel'd him principally againſt all Lying, and Injuſtice. *Tully*, after ſome inſtances of ſevere integrity in the ancient Romans, turns ſhort upon what he had ſaid with this reflection, *Quorſum hæc? Ut intelligas, non placuiſſe majoribus noſtris aſtutos:* "By theſe (ſaid he) "you may underſtand that deceitful and "crafty Knaves were in very little eſteem "with our Anceſtors. Among the Jews *Solomon* was the *Wiſeſt Man*, and the *Greateſt King*, and beſt knew what became the *Providence*

dence and *Grandeur* of *Majeſty*; and yet in his Proverbs he left us this Aphoriſm; *Excellent Speech becometh not a Fool, much leſs do Lying Lips a Prince.* *Arrianus* writing of *Ptolemy* ſays ᾧ αὐτῷ βασιλεῖ ὄντι αἰσχρότερον ἢ τῷ ἄλλῳ ψεύσασθαι ἦν; *That conſidered as a King, 'twas a more ſhameful thing for him to Lye, than for any other Man.* And *Mamertinus* in his Character of *Julian*, harangues him handſomly upon this Topick. "What a wonderful Con-" cord is there between our Prince's Tongue " and his Heart? He well knows that a Lye " is the Vice but of baſe and narrow minds, " the ſhift of Slaves; and ſince 'tis fear or " needineſs commonly makes Men Lyars, a " Monarch who takes to the little trick of " Lying, muſt be ſtrangely inſenſible where-" in the Majeſty of his Condition conſiſts. * *Ariſtotle* deſcribes it in two words, ὁ μεγαλόψυχος παῤῥησιαστικὸς ᾧ ἀληθευτικὸς, *Freedom* and *Truth* are ſigns of a *great Soul.* On the other hand, 'twas ſmartly ſaid of an ingenious Author, that † *Falſehood and Legerdemain ſink the Character of a Prince, and make him look like a Royal Jugler.*

And yet, there aroſe, ſome years ago, an *Italian* Stateſman, *deviliſh* Wiſe and ſubtle above all the World, who has given young Princes a much different ſence of Honour and Majeſty, and tells them, without ceremony, that they muſt diſſemble and Lye, as oft as they can ſerve an end by it, or they will be *Novices*, and unfit to Govern. This Do-

* *Nic.* 4. 8. Mr. *Collier's* Pref. to his Tranſlation of *Anto.*

ctrine overſpread *Italy*; the Book at *Rome* out-ſold the beſt Divinity; but it was not long confined there; for the ſame as a Great Man ſaid of * *Atheiſm*, was notoriouſly true of Diſſembling and Lying. *That in the laſt Age, it Travel'd over the Alps, and infected France*; the fitteſt and likelieſt things to Travel in Company: There it has long dwelt, and *reign'd*, and ſent out ſuch an Epidemical infection into all the Courts of Chriſtendom, that they have been at once both taught, and conſtrained to deal back the ſame expedient in their own defence: And Matters ſeem coming now to that paſs, that if what our Lord ſaid was in the way of Prophecy, *That when the Son of Man came, one ſhould not find Faith on the Earth*; It is probable, by the preſent face of things, that he muſt be nearer than we are aware of; there is hardly any *Faith*, becauſe there is ſcarce any *Sincerity* left among Men: And I can think of but one fair Chance for Truth to come about again into Credit; and that is, that great Men will ſhortly *wear* the *habit* of Deceit and Lying ſo *threadbare*, that it ſhall no longer ſerve to *cover* the nakedneſs of their minds; and when it is become unfit for ſervice, 'tis like they will leave it off. It is long ſince the Credit of Princes ran ſo low, that *Charles* the *Vth.* when he proteſted any thing with more ſolemnity than ordinary, would ſet aſide his Imperial Character, for that he found would paſs for nothing; and the form of his ſtricteſt aſſevera-

tions

* A. B. *Tillotſon.*

tions was, *a fé de hombre de bien*, "upon the "faith of an honeſt Man!

But 'till the Men *above*, who are placed high enough to ſhine out for Examples, ſhall reconcile Sincerity with Quality, and make Truth and Honour good Friends again, 'tis a vain thing to expect the *leſſer* People will find in their hearts to leave Lying: Their way is to *look up*, and live by imitation; 'tis a ſmall thing to ſay, they are prone to take after the little Vices of great Men, for they have been known ſo ſervile, as to affect being like them, even in their natural deformities: And if Men have faultered with their Tongues, and Stuttered in their Speech, and thruſt out their Backs, and diſtorted their Legs, and plucked out their Eyes, to reſemble and mimick their Princes, will they not diſſemble, and prevaricate, and Lye to be *like* them? For this does not conſtrain them to be *unlike* themſelves: Tho' if the People would conſider like Men, there is no more reaſon we ſhould imitate our Betters in their moral, than in their natural defects. It is indeed more adviſeable of the two, that we ſhould *pull out our right Eye* to reſemble them by being *ſingle ſighted*, than that we ſhould, for reſemblance ſake, abandon *all ſingleneſs of Heart. It is better for us to enter into Life with one Eye, rather than having two Eyes, to be caſt into Hell Fire.*

4. The Sin of Lying has got no ſmall ground and credit, from the countenance ſome Learned Men have given it in their Writings: They have indulged it in ſome

ſpecial

ſpecial Caſes, and that's a great Point gained; and when Men are, by Nature and Cuſtom diſpos'd to any Vice, a ſmall help from good Authority will keep them on with aſſurance, like a freſh puſh to a Bowl a running, it will ſpeed it forward merrily: But I have made ſome reflections upon this Conſideration already: All that I ſhall farther add is this, That *Grotius*, and *Puffendorff*, who, of Eminent Authors, have made the leargeſt allowances for Lying, are the leſs to be wonder'd at, or inſiſted on, if we conſider, that their Books are upon the *Laws of Nations*, and *the Rights of War and Peace*: And he who obſerves how freely the uſe of it has gained in the practice of *Politicians*, will the leſs wonder to find it favoured in *Political* Syſtems: His Reaſon will lead him to ſuſpect, that the Indulgence they plead for, is not ſo much becauſe they judged it *Lawful*, but only *expedient*, to yield a little to the iniquity of the Times; and ſo they wrote rather with regard to what Mankind *were*, than what they *ſhould* be. * *Puffendorff* is ſo ingenuous and frank, as to make this his expreſs Apology: "But for as much as thoſe who are ſincere and open hearted, muſt, as the World "ſtands, lie very much at the mercy of "Knaves; and becauſe moſt Men are pleas'd "to compaſs their Ends by vain and ſly "Tricks, rather than by ſound and ſubſtantial Meaſures; therefore it may not be con"venient to proſcribe the inoffenſive arts of "ſimulation

* L. 4. p. 318.

" ſimulation and diſſimulation out of Hu-
" mane Society 'till Men return from being
" Villainous and diſtracted againſt one an-
" other, to their right minds, to a ſenſe of
" integrity, and true Wiſdom. Now, you ſee, the true ſecret of their Doctrine is out; and all that can be ſaid in return is this, That 'till Men are recovered to their right minds, 'tis nonſence to contend with them about what is lawful, and what not; and when they are as they ſhould be, there will remain it ſeems no pretence at all for diſſembling and Lying.

5. I am apt to think, the vaſt degrees of diſproportion in the Guilt of Lying, has cheated Men to make very bold with it in ſome lighter Caſes. There is difference in Lying, as in all other Sins; it is ſo pernicious and hainous in ſome reſpects, and in others ſo inoffenſive and obliging, that it does not look like the ſame Vice: A Man may Lye another out of his Eſtate, his Name, his very Life, or he may Lye to *divert*, and to do him *good*: hence Men have been induced to diſtinguiſh between the ſpecial degrees of this Sin, with ſuitable allowances; ſome ſorts of it they make no account of at all, others, they would have you believe, they would not tell for a Kingdom. But, after all, there may be a greater fallacy in this notion than we are aware of; for a Lye is the ſelf ſame thing in all Caſes: But Circumſtances added to it, may ſerve to joyn more or leſs of other Sins along with it, and that is all the difference. Thus, when Men tell an *injurious* Lye, they commit

commit two or more Wickedneſſes at once, and then Iniquities they do, and the Lyes which were the means to bring them about, ought to have diſtinct Conſiderations. So then, let the Lye be ſtrip'd of what other evils may attend it, and let thoſe be call'd by their proper names apart, and then there will only remain the bare untruth wilfully and deceitfully utter'd, which is no more than what we muſt tell in any other Reſpect, to be guilty of a Lye.

Jezabel, by ſuborning *two Sons of Belial* to teſtifie a Lye againſt *Naboth*, took away from him at once, both his Vineyard, and his Life: And muſt all that be call'd but a Lye? there was Perjury, Oppreſſion, and Murther in the Caſe too, which are all ſo many diſtinct Sins from Lying; thoſe joyn'd together with it in the ſame Fact, muſt give it manifold Aggravations: But this is no more than to ſay, that the guilt of many Sins put together, muſt weigh heavier than one of them ſingly; and who ever doubted it? complicated Caſes, whether in the Mind or Body, are worſe than one ſimple Malady; but then thoſe other Evils muſt be conſider'd and dealt with diſtinctly, under their proper Names by themſelves; and if, after that, we come to judge of the bare Lye remaining by it ſelf, there will be no more before us than, *the untruth told with Intention to deceive*, and ſo much muſt go on any other, tho' never ſo light an Occaſion, to make it a finiſh'd Lye. As therefore, the Philoſopher, in deſcribing a *ſincere* Man, would have him be ſimply true in all Reſpects, without conſidering how far.

far Juſtice be or be not concern'd in the Matter, * ἄλλης γὰρ ἂν εἴη ταυτ' ἀρετῆς, *becauſe this was the Buſineſs of another diſtinct Virtue*; ſo, when we fairly repreſent to our ſelves the guilt of a Lye, we muſt take it aſide by it ſelf, and ſtrip it naked of all other diſtinct Sins hanging about it, and then a Lye will be the ſame in one Caſe as in another; and when it is that particular Vice we pretend to delare againſt, we muſt avoid it, in all Reſpects, with one and the ſame abſolute diſlike.

6. That which has greatly contributed to bring this Sin ſo much in Uſe and Requeſt, has been the ſeeming *Advantages* oft-times of Lying, and the *Diſadvantages* peradventure, of being ſtraitly bound up to our Words. A Lye pretends frequently to ſtand us in great ſtead: 'Tis an apt and handy invention for Buſineſs and may be turn'd with Dexterity to very good Accounts. On the Contrary, to be ſtrictly Sincere at all Adventures; many times how unſeaſonable? how Inconvenient? how Hazardous? plain Truth is commonly ungrateful and diſobliging; it has been † Proverb'd for bringing us under hatred: Therefore obſerve, your wary deſigning Men, who lay out for as much good Will in the World as they can get, and with Intent to make the moſt of it, are cautious how they meddle with it; He who ſticks to it ſuperſtitiouſly and inflexibly, will ſcatter his Friends,

* Ariſt. Eth. † *Veritas odium parit.*

Friends, and make his Admirers very ſhy of him; the *Apoſtle* inſiſted on it till he had like to have been utterly abandoned. *Am I therefore become your Enemy, becauſe I tell you the Truth?* It was obſerved by a witty Author, that there are *three* very deſirable *Nymphs*, which generally *lie in* with *three* very ugly illfavour'd *Daughters: Familiarity* which brings *Contempt*; *Peace* which engenders *Idleneſs*; and *Truth* which begets *Ill-will:* The way to keep Friends and be well eſteemed, is to Flatter and Humour, and deal Deceitfully; he who *Propheſies* to *pleaſe, muſt not propheſie right Things; he muſt propheſie ſmooth Things; he muſt propheſie Deceit.* Thus plauſible and inviting the temptation to Lying looks from this Quarter; I ſhall therefore be the more diſtinct in what I reply. And,

1*ſt.* To the ſeeming Advantages of Lying, It may be ſaid *Firſt*, That this is not always even the Pretence that leads us to it: Often Men make a trade of Lying, when they have no ſuch Proſpect or Aim, but out of pure cuſtom and liking to the Sin; their Tongues are turn'd to it, and they cannot help it. Here then, it muſt be confeſt, the Grand Deceiver gains ſuch Lyars at a very cheap and eaſie Rate, they coſt him juſt nothing: When God ſuffers Men to run on in this kind of Lying, it may be ſaid to him in the *Pſalmiſts* Words, *Thou ſelleſt thy People for nought, and takeſt no Money for them.*

Again; ſuppoſe we would practice it for advantageous Ends; I would then ask, whether we would make it inſtrumental to attain unrighteous and ungodly Profit, or only

for

for the more clever diſpatch of Buſineſs in an honeſt way? If the firſt be the Caſe, and you make uſe of Lying to compaſs whatever you luſt after right or wrong, you are not fit to be reaſoned with upon this Subject. It is a vain prepoſterous Thing to think of ſtriking Men with the guilt of Lying, when they are not ſtruck in Conſcience at Extortion and avow'd Injuſtice: They who make unrighteous Gains upon other Men by Lying, are upon the ſame level, in point of Guilt, with thoſe who trade upon the High-way; there lies no Difference between them, in reſpect to Principle or Honour, but only as to the danger of the Means; Knavery is not ſo capital and mortal as Robbery, becauſe not ſo daring an inſult upon civil Society and the Laws: However, the Perſon injured may be equally a loſer in both Caſes; and I believe there is no Man of any Reſentment, but would more freely deliver to one who comes boldly up to demand it at the peril of his Life, than to him who ſhall ſteal it from him underhand by a ſmooth and wheedling Lye: The Son of *Sirach*, I believe, would be underſtood in this Sence, when he ſays, that * *a Thief is better than a Man that is accuſtomed to Lye.*

But admit a Lye may carry our *unrighteous* Purpoſes for once or twice, how long will it hold uſeful and practicable? And, when we are once betray'd in the Practice of it, another Queſtion is, How long ſhall we be a gathering

* Eccluſ. 20. 25.

gathering up our broken Credit? The *ſervice* of Deceitfulneſs is but of ſhort Continuance, but the Scandal of it is for ever. 'Tis very uſual for Lyars to be found out, but not ſo common afterward to ſee them truſted; he who depends upon falſe and lying Shifts to get an Eſtate, muſt make haſte to be Rich, or he makes haſte to be ruined; *that he does he muſt do quickly*, or he muſt be undone for ever. There is this manifeſt Difference between the Service of Truth and Lying; Truth will ſtand by us everlaſtingly, if it be baulkt and defeated once, it will riſe with a good Face, and take heart again; but Lying is a very ſlight and brittle Faculty, it cannot poſſibly hold long, and when once it flies abroad, it can never be made ſerviceable more: And this Difference the *wiſe Man* put between them; *The Lip of Truth ſhall be eſtabliſht for ever, but a Lying Tongue is but for a Moment*: And where then are the vaſt advantages of Falſhood? It may not ſerve us at all, it cannot ſerve us long; and when it is once known to be our Practice, it will be our Hindrance and Ruin for ever: Make the moſt of it, the profit of Falſhood is flitting, unſteady, and precarious; an Eſtate without a good Title: *The getting of Treaſures by a lying Tongue, is a Vanity toſſed to and fro of them that ſeek Death*: It is a profit too, which, tho' never ſo ſmoothly gotten, muſt needs grate upon the Mind with ſome Remorſe; which *Solomon* repreſents by a very ſenſible and lively Image, when he ſays, * *Bread of* Deceit *is ſweet*

* Heb. Of Lying.

ſweet to a Man, but afterwards his Mouth ſhall be fill'd with Gravel: In fine, Falſhood and Lying are a ſorry beggarly Trade: *A Man full of Words ſhall not proſper upon the Earth.* Such as theſe are Reflections for diſhonourable dealers to chew upon. On the other Hand,-----

To thoſe who are not given up to unrighteous Deſigns, and therefore don't deſire to Lye for *Injuſtice*, but only for an honeſt diſpatch of Buſineſs, I would offer upon the General; that Truth is a more ready, ſhort, compendious Method for Expedition than Lying; plain Truth, like plain Force will baffle Craft and Stratagem, and put *Falſifying* quite out of Play; and, when once we have got the Reputation of it, will prove ten thouſand times more acceptable and obliging; and therefore I would only deſire ſuch Men for the Preſent, that they would refrain from doing any buſineſs by Lying, which in reaſon might as well or better have been done without it; which is but a fair, eaſie Article, and if they begin, and be punctual in this, I am ſatisfied, there will be ſo very few Caſes occurring, where they deſign honeſtly, which may not as well be negotiated without Lying, as with it, that in a little time they muſt drop the ſcurvy Habit of courſe, for want of neceſſary Provocations to recurr to that Expedient.

2. To the *Diſadvantages* of ſtrict Sincerity, which was the latter part of the Objection, I have this to ſay; that at the worſt they are but Little and Momentary;

and ſuch as are rather fanſied, and fear'd, than Real; and which in the end never fail of making a Man ample Amends: They are like the diſadvantages of parting with a little *ready* Caſh, for a mighty Purchaſe in *Reverſion:* Impartial Truth may perhaps, diſoblige upon the Spot; but no one ever goes away confirm'd in an ill Opinon of the *Plain Dealer*; if he does not *take* with us at *Sight*, beſure he will when we come again to *peruſe* him. We may loſe a Friend peradventure by a ſevere Truth, but he who being convinc'd of our good Intention, will break with us on that Score, is better loſt than kept; and it will never loſe us one, but it ſhall put two in the Place; for nothing more effectually recommends and qualifies for true *Friendſhip*, than a ſteady and try'd Integrity. There is but one juſt Exception againſt Truth, and that is when it bolts out unſeaſonably, in breach of Truſt, or againſt good Manners: Now I am far from ſaying, a ſincere Man is bound to blab out every thing he knows; we are not always upon *Oath* to keep pouring out *the whole Truth*; the ſtanding Obligation is, that we ſpeak *nothing but the Truth*; and the Rule, in General, when *that* ought to come forth is, as often as we think we can do good by it, or avoid Lying; at ſuch Seaſons, if it will not paſs for good Manners, I am ſure it will for good Morals: And if I were to chooſe my Character, I had rather at any time be thought *rudely* Sincere, than *obligingly* deceitful.

But the worſt is, Truth, upon ſome Occaſions, is a treacherous Tell-tale thing; and will

will expoſe and bring us to Correction. Now I confeſs when our Wickedneſs has run us into ſuch Streights, that we dare not own what we have done, our Caſe is Evil and Deſperate: But however, to think of bringing our ſelves off harmleſs by a Lye, is unadviſeable upon all Accounts. It is, *Firſt*, a very unlikely Expedient to ſucceed; How eaſie it is to bewilder Guilt, by a croſs and ſtern Examination? and how Natural and ready it is to bolt out at our Tongues, our Eyes, our Complection, nay thro' the very Pores of our Skin? *In the next Place*, 'tis a very mean and daſtardly Shift, and muſt betray a little, timorous, poor Spirit within. Then *again*, it ſerves to load a guilty Condition with freſh Burthen; like a foul Bruſh, inſtead of ſtriking Filthineſs off, it lays more on, and the Fault that moſt needs it, is doubled by it. And, *Laſtly*, it is ſuch a violent Provocation and *bar* againſt Forgiveneſs, that, all things conſider'd, it is rather a more dangerous and fatal Expedient than Truth; a Remedy that bids very likely to be worſe than the Diſeaſe. If thoſe before whom we ſtand accus'd, were otherwiſe ever ſo diſpos'd and bent toward Clemency, a Lye muſt needs very much urge and try them; when all the reſt is forgiven, *that* will ſtill look unpardonable; there is ſome room for favour upon Confeſſion, becauſe 'tis a ſign there is ſome grace left, which may chance to work Amendment. And therefore when *Cyrus* ſate in Judgment upon *Armenius*, and being reſolv'd beforehand to be very merciful, he begins his Charge to the Priſoner of War with expreſs

expreſs Admonition, That he take care to offer nothing in his Defence but what was ſincerly true; * ἵνα σοι ἓν γὲ ἀπῇ τὸ ἐυμισητότατον, *that ſo* (ſaid he) *you may keep your ſelf guiltleſs of that one Thing, which is, out of all compariſon, the moſt hateful and deteſtable:* And he goes on warning him, that nothing was wont to prove ſuch a ſure *let* and obſtacle to mercy, as to be caught in an obſtinate Lye: I may be allow'd therefore to ſtrengthen and conclude all this, with the Counſel of the Son of *Syrach*, *Bind not one Sin upon another, for in one thou ſhalt not be unpuniſhed.*

7. The free and univerſal Practice of this Sin, ſerves for an effectual Encouragement to it; all ſorts and ſizes of People are more or leſs addicted to it: And if there be no expreſs *Law* for Lying, yet a general and immemorial *Cuſtom* may be pleaded in favour of it: Now, we are not apt to be very ſcrupulous or remorſeful at any thing, which we ſee every body make bold with as well as our ſelves: But whatever Satisfaction or ſtay this may be to our Conſciences in *Fact*, yet in *Reaſon* it can be none at all: For, in any caſe where our Souls lie at Stake, 'tis not the practice of all the World that ſhould be Perſwaſion enough, to make us play them away for Company. That was a very juſt and wiſe Precept of *Moſes*, *thou ſhalt not follow a Multitude to do Evil:* He knew how ready and prone

* Zen. *de* Cyr. *Inſt.* l. 3.

prone we were to be drawn aſide by this Pretence, but gives us expreſs Caution and Command againſt it, for it was a Pretence that would not hold: And I cannot but farther Remark, that he gave that general Rule, not without ſome particular regard to Lying, and Falſehood; as if we depended more confidently upon the Practice of the *many*, to bear us out in this, than in any other Sin: For in the very Words foregoing he gives this Law: *Thou ſhalt not raiſe a falſe Report; put not thy Hand with the Wicked, to be an unrighteous Witneſs*; then it comes after, *Thou ſhalt not follow a multitude to do evil.*

8. *Laſtly*, There's one thing more which I fear ſerves to keep Men on very ſmoothly and inſenſibly in the guilt of Lying; and that is, the light and indifferent Thoughts that are generally entertain'd as to the evil of it; we do not ſeem to look upon it ſuch an ungodly and hainous Crime; it were better, if we could, to forbear it; but it is not unpardonable if we cannot: Some have in part defended it; others have beg'd it for a venial Sin, and few I believe apprehend it a mortal one: And therefore Men are ſcarce Serious when they are found Guilty: It paſſes off in Banter, and when we upbraid one another for it, 'tis commonly but in Joke and Raillery: We often talk of it pleaſantly, but ſeldom with any deep Concern or Reflection; not as a matter of that Conſequence, to be laid home either to other Mens Conſciences, or our own: in effect we make nothing of it. Now this is all juſt as the Tempter could wiſh; he

he well knows there is no fear of our forſaking any Vice, ſo long as we make a jeſt of it, and Rebuke and Correct one another about it, only for good Sport; he loves we ſhould go on cheerfully and jocularly in our Way, and take Content and Comfort as we go; he never has us more Safe, than while we think our ſelves Secure: But when our Security is plainly from *Diſtemper*, and not from *Reaſon*, it is very fit we ſhould be jog'd out of it: Men in a Lethargy muſt be diſturb'd and rous'd; the kindeſt Office that can be done them is, to ſound an Alarm in their Ears, and awaken them to a due Senſe of their Conditon. I muſt therefore beg leave to interrupt the Lyars Repoſe with this Remembrance, That he lives in the Habit of a known and damnable Sin, in a Habit whoſe every wilful Act has been proved to be ſimply and eſſentially Evil in the very Nature of it; that the Sin he makes ſo *light of*, and that does *ſo eaſily beſet him*, is a fundamental Failing, a deviation from God, a taking after the Devil, a making in for Adoption to the *Father of Lyes*, a *legitimating* our ſelves for the Kingdom of Darkneſs: And, whether a Sin of this Nature will be allow'd to paſs for a *Jeſt* in the Accounts of our Lives, the great and dreadful Tribunal will one day determine. The mean while, the Wiſe Man ſpeaks of it as a very fooliſh Thing, to make our ſelves Merry with our Failings; *Fools make a mock of Sin*; Trifle and Sport with that which is, above all things, a ſubject for their Sorrow. I ſhould think Men ſhould find

no

no true Diverſion in *tickling* one another to *Death*; in Laughing and Bantring themſelves to Damnation.

CHAP. IV.

Reaſons to put away and deteſt Lying.

IV. I *Come now to offer for what good Reaſons* (over and above what I have already touch'd on) *we ought ſeriouſly to put away and deteſt, this baſe and diſingenuos Habit of Lying.* And,

Firſt, The Difficulties, Vexations, and Diſappointments which the Practice of Lying uſually involves Men in, ſhould be one good reaſon to make us out of Conceit and Humour with it: To carry on the Trade and Cuſtom of it, with Security and Succeſs, is no eaſy Undertaking: It is an *unnatural* and forc'd Character to manage; it is to ſay and ſeem one thing, and to think and to be the contrary: And this part muſt not only be often acted, but always conceal'd; and Falſehood be conſtantly contriv'd to look like Truth, to make any thing of it; which being a conſtrain'd and affected Part, 'tis an hundred to one but it is over-acted, and betray'd. The way of Truth is Plain, Direct, and Obvious, and needs no ſollicitous Care, or Enquiry to hit it off; we ſee it lie ſtreight before us, 'tis the neareſt and firſt

that naturally Presents; so that if you take the Wise Man's Direction, and *Let thine Eyes look right on, and let thine Eye-lids look streight before thee, if thou turn not to the Right Hand, nor to the Left*, thou canst not fail of being secure in thy Way and End; for to use the Mathematical Image of a great Man; as in * *Geometry* of all *Lines* and *Surfaces* contained within the same Bounds; the *streight* Line, and the *plain* Surface, is always the shortest; so of all the *Designs* and *Attempts* within the Compass of human Life, the *shortest* and the *surest* to their End are those, which are carryed on by the Lines of *Truth* and *Sincerity*. But how crooked and intricate? How winding and obscure? How abstruse, unbeaten, and hazardous, are the Ways and Measures of a Lyar? He steals about in the dark unfrequented Tracks, has a world of odd Turnings to hit upon, and one false Step misleads and ruins all; *he entereth not in at the Door, but climbeth up some other way*, and therefore comes always suspected for *a Thief and a Robber*; and to be but suspected in an indirect Course is to be defeated.

A designing Lyar works about his *Conclusions*, and makes after his *Ends*, by the most precarious *means* and *premises* imaginable; upon Verisimulous Propositions which have not any Foundation of Truth in them; upon the Connection and Coherence of things one with

* *Dr.* Barrow.

with another, which are Unrelative, Remote, and Inconſiſtent; and upon ſuppoſition that Men who violently ſuſpect and Miſtruſt him, will never Examine, Diſcuſs, or compare what he ſays; upon ſo many ſuppoſitions and chances, that he muſt have ſtrange luck, as well as cunning, to have every thing fall in right; and if but one ſingle thread of his *Gueſs-Work* flies out, it unravels and undoes the whole: The projects of *Lying* are like falſe *Chymiſtry*, in which ſomething is generally left out, or over done, which ſpoils all. When a Lyar has laid his Scheme at beſt, he has reaſon to ſuſpect and fear how it will go, becauſe of the many Accidents that muſt be regarded, and the many proviſos that muſt be taken in to make it ſucceed; it is like a *Mechaniſm* overclog'd with Work, in which the too great number and variety of Wheels and Inſtruments, that are made contributing to carry on the Movement, do but retard and perplex it, and give it ſo many the more Chances to go wrong and to ſtop; a plain Syſtem, that has the leaſt curioſity of invention, is much the likelieſt to move right, and to hold it. When the Lyar has actually built up a deſign without being interrupted, it is upon ſuch an unſound and falſe Foundation, and hangs by ſuch a deal of odd Geometry, that it will need continual Repairs and Underlayings to ſuſtain it, and leſs than the neceſſary Charge to keep it ſhored up, would have raiſed a true ſubſtantial Building from the Ground; and after all, if but one piece give way, the whole muſt tumble down into a ſcandalous Rubbiſh.

Now when the part a Man has to act is so troubleſome and unnatural, his meaſures are ſo difficult and precarious, and his diſappointments ſo likely and ſo reproachful, how perplext, aboding, and ruffled muſt his Mind generally be? As wakeful and ſtartling as a Bird; under conſtant Fear, Apprehenſions, and Alarm: His Life is mainly taken up in extricating himſelf out of the Surprizes of paſt Lyes, and in providing and warning againſt future Intanglements; and no wonder if he find himſelf often bewildered, paſt any proſpect of getting out; he is like one who chuſes to clamber over Fences, and to bruſh through Encloſures, in order to make out a ſhorter way to his End; but conſidering how oft he muſt be ſtopt for want of a *Shord*, how much ſpace is ſpent in ſearching up and down for a convenient paſs, how many times he muſt be forc'd to come back again, and how frequently he muſt ſtand muſing to conſider whereabouts he is, he had much better have taken the plain and the true way, which may be the fartheſt about, but will prove the neareſt and ſureſt to bring us home: Beſides the hazard that attends the other courſe, either of breaking a Bone, or ſcratching our Fleſh, or ſcandalouſly renting our Habits, with the Vexation and Anxiety that muſt keep raking and harrowing up the Mind all the while, at our frequent and unavoidable diſappointments, to all which the wiſe Man moſt aptly and pertinently alludeth, when he ſays, *who ſo breaketh an Hedge, a Serpent ſhall bite him.* And how miſerably have I ſeen a little Lyar hung upon the hooks, ſurpriz'd

ſurpriz'd and hitched, and caught, paſt poſſibiliy of getting off? How have I obſerved him wrigling about, working up and down, skipping backward and forward, ſtriking on fore right, and then running counter, dodging and ferretting to and fro, to make it out at a fault; ſaying, and unſaying, fending and proving, explaining, paraphraſing, and denying what he has unadviſedly ſaid, to make it hang a little better together; involved, and vext, and hampered many times beyond all skill and endeavour of winding himſelf out clearly? He who is wont to bring about his purpoſes by Lying, will find himſelf ſo taken up, and occupied in the meaſures of his Conduct, that he muſt have little leiſure for any ſubſtantial Buſineſs; and after all he muſt be often obliged to Eat his own words, which, as empty as they are, prove a ſort of Diet that goes againſt a Man exceedingly; to Eat our own words, is next to eating our own Fleſh: Yet this, and a thouſand hardſhips more, a Lyar muſt rub through, beyond what an upright Man can well Imagine; who has, therefore little reaſon to envy that ſubtile, ſhrow'd Fellow, for his cunning and dexterity in Buſineſs. Sincerity, being ſingle, has but one plain way to its end, not very troubleſome to proceed in, that has not many Chances to be miſtook, and in which a Man may go boldly on, without being Conſcious, or Apprehenſive at what may croſs him in his way.

2. It concerns us to deteſt and Abandon the baſe Pernicious Habit of Lying, for the Damage it does to all Human Teſtimony: The

more we deceive and betray one another, by Falſehood and treachery, the more we ſhall give cauſe for Univerſal Suſpicion and Diſtruſt: So that as the faculty of Lying thrives and over-ſpreads, common Faith and Confidence muſt Sicken, and Pine away; and Credibility Canker and Conſume ſo far, till it almoſt reach up to taint, even, Divine Faith it ſelf: For the Truth of the Goſpel reſts upon the Credit and Teſtimony of thoſe who firſt penned and Preached it; and therefore, if we are all found ſo lamentable Deceitful and Falſe to one another, that we know not who, or what we can believe with ſafety, 'tis eaſy to ſee how far this may affect Religious Faith: Human Teſtimony cannot be rendred Precarious, and of ſmall Account, but it muſt looſen, and ſap the Foundation of all Holy Principles. It is, indeed, our firm and immovable Security, that Conſcientious Men, of the ſincereſt and truſtieſt Characters, were choſen to bear Record of Chriſt; and that they Sealed their Depoſitions with their Blood: And, above all, that Chriſt's Reſurrection was Witneſſed by *above Five Hundred* Credible Perſons at once: But, nevertheleſs, if we carry on the Trade of Lying to that degree of Scandal and Diſcredit, that there ſhall be ſcarce a Man in *Five Hundred*, whoſe Words we can entirely depend on; this, at leaſt, to a common Lyar, muſt render a firm and ſteady Faith, ſomewhat difficult. He who is Conſcious of that frailty, will be too apt to ſuſpect and meaſure all Mankind by himſelf, he will even be *ſlow of Heart, to believe all*

that

that the Prophets have Spoken. A Man who deſerves no Credit, is ſeldom over Credulous.

But Lying muſt have a much worſe effect upon the Credit of all *Prophane* Hiſtory; which having neither *Miraculous Proof*, nor *Eye Evidence*, nor *Inſpiration*, nor *Martyrdom*, nor *Sacred Tradition*, nor any of thoſe Advantageous Circumſtances to ſtay it up, as the *revealed* Hiſtory has, muſt reſt altogether upon Human Teſtimony, and report: Which, by the Low Eſteem at which it now runs, is enough to cauſe, almoſt, every thing to be Read for *Romance*. It is a light thing to ſay that, in Common Occurrences, a Man cannot ſafely Credit two removes from his own Eyes; ſeeing that, in the moſt Publick and Important Tranſactions of the World, a Mans belief is ſo baffled by Partial, Repugnant, and Contradictory Relations, that, by that time both ſides have given out their different Accounts, all that a Man finds himſelf Morally Certain of is, that he can Credit neither. The contending Powers firſt *Fight* it out, and then *Lye* it out: And the battle which has been Miſerably loſt in the *Field*, has generally been retrived, and won back to a miracle in the Relation: So that a Faithful Hiſtorian knows not which way to Number up the Slain, nor often on which ſide to give the Victory. And for this we are to be the leſs ſevere, upon the ſwarms of little *Noveliſts* who Retail the Publick Occurrences, when we conſider, with what Aſſurance the Groſſeſt Lyes are, from all Quarters, Obtruded, and *Publiſhed* upon us *by Authority*.

But, moſt of all muſt common Lying impair and ruine common belief and reliance, and moulder away that Mutual Faith which is the cement of all Civil Society: When Mens Words will no longer Paſs Currently, for fear of Counterfeits, and they will Credit no farther than they poſſeſs or ſee, all Converſation and Dealing muſt Degenerate into Banter, Craft, and Diſſimulation: And as, in frontier Countries which lie Expos'd all, even to the meaneſt Peaſants, are wont to draw out to Market *begirt*, as to a *Rendezvous*, and to drive their Bargains, as it were, Sword in Hand; So, while Falſehood and Prevarication Prevail, and become the Mode of Society, it muſt diſſolve all Fellowſhip and Commerce into a State of Diſtruſt and War; every Man will take *Jealouſie for* his *compleat Armour*, and ſuſpect, and ſtand upon his Guard.

Mutual Faith and Truſt is much the ſame *Binding* to Societies, as that *Plaſtick* Power, which keeps the parts of matter together, is in Bodies; ſo that if we can no longer believe or Credit one another, we can no longer ſtick together, or Incorporate; the Subſtance Vaniſhes, the Body *Particles* it away into Atomes, and Men are no more a Society, but Individuals. To make the Paralel between *Civil* and *Natural* Bodies *hold*, there ought to be the ſame fidelity between Perſons in Society, as between parts of the ſame Body: And as, when the Senſes are Treacherous, and the Faculties Falſe to one another, the Man Runs Diſtracted, and is no longer to be truſted alone: So when the Members of Civil Bodies deceive and cozen each other, without regard to Common Faith

Faith and Honour, Society runs Raving, all good Underſtanding ceaſes, and Men Diſunite, Uncivilize, and Relapſe into the Salvage State.

And upon this notion it is, that St. *Paul* grounds the reaſon of his Exhortation againſt this Sin; *Wherefore, putting away Lying, Speak every Man Truth with his Neighbour, for*, ſays he, *we are Members one of another:* And conſequently, for any Man to deceive his Neighbour by a Lye, would be ſuch another Unnatural Treachery, as it would be for our own Eyes to miſlead and betray our Feet, by a falſe Direction: Upon which place St. *Chryſoſtome* has moſt Pertinently Paraphraſed, to this Effect: "* When we ſuſpect that we are coming upon unſafe and hollow Ground, is it not the Duty of our Feet to prove the Turf, whether it will bear to be Trodden over? Or, if our Eyes ſhall diſcover a Snake, or Viper in the Graſs, do they not inſtantly bid our Feet beware? And do not our Feet believe our Eyes, and take warning? Or, if the *Senſe* upon the Watch be our Smell, there is no fear that our Noſe ſhould wilfully recommend Poiſon to our Mouth, becauſe, in deceiving ſo near a Neighbour, the Ruine would reach home to it ſelf; which would ſoon turn livid upon the deadly Draught: No! But if we are right in our *Senſes*, they will make a true Judgement and report of things, and the faculties give fair notice and Aſſiſtance, and ſtand Faithfully by one another: And, by this

* Comment. Cap. 4. Epiſt. ad Eph. Hom. 14.

" Mutual Sincerity of the Members in Natu-
" ral Bodies, you may learn, with what un-
" feigned Truth and Honour you ought to
" converſe and deal, in all your Words and
" Actions, as you are knit together in Socie-
" ty; for this makes you, in effect, to be as
" Members of the ſame Body. But the con-
trary Practice of Diſſembling and Lying, draws after it ſuch a general Diſtruſt, Enmity, Treachery, Selfiſhneſs, and Infidelity; ſuch a Train of Ill-natured and Helliſh Vices, as tend to looſen the Cement, and ſhake the frame of Civil Bodies; to diſſever all Union and Order, Ruine all Reciprocal Truſt and Credit; to break up and Disband Society, and diſperſe the Rational kind back again, into a State of Natural Wildneſs and Hoſtility.

3. Lying ought farther to be Abhor'd, as a *Peſtilent*, *Injurious* Evil, of a Perfidious and Malignant Influence; Inſtrumental in all the Deliberate Wrongs and Villanies that have been done in the World, ſince the Foundation of it. This was that Original Sin, which aroſe, and gave the firſt Stroke in the War which began in Heaven: For *the Devil abode not in the Truth*; and by departing from *that*, he fell away from *God*; and for his Rebellion againſt *Eternal Truth*, was, in one Dreadful Deciſion, caſt down, with all its Traiterous Legions, into the Bottomleſs Pit; there to dwell for ever, *with Dogs, and Sorcerers, and Whoremongers, and Murtherers, and Idolaters, and whoſoever loveth and maketh a Lye*: Confederates

federates of his own power making and Complexion!

From the fall of Angels, the devouring Lye took effect in the fall of Man: For, the Grand Deceiver no ſooner felt himſelf in Damnation, but he meditated to draw down the Rational Race after him: He could not bear that Creatures of an Inferiour *Orb*, ſhould remain honeſter or happier than himſelf: And his ſure method of ſeducing them, againſt which they ſhould have the leaſt defence or Guard, was a Deceitful, Perfidious Lye. *God doth know, that, in the Day ye Eat thereof, ye ſhall be as Gods*! After this, the firſt Preſent he made the poor deluded wretches, to welcome them among the Degenerate, was the Gift of Lying: he firſt convinced them, by a Memorable Experiment, what was the proper uſe and end of it; and then made them Maſters in the Faculty: And, from that time, it's Incredible, *what Deſtruction it has wrought upon the Earth*! This *little Ball* has never felt any reſt or calm from its Accurſed Influences, the Breath of it is Peſtilent, Epidemical, and Ruinous, perpetually ſcattering Wild-fire and Poiſon about the World.

A practiced Lyar, no doubt, will be ſurpriz'd, and ſtartled at this Reflection; He will be apt to call it meer *Declamation*; For, tho' he may be a little Conſcious of this failing, he thinks it ſuch a Pardonable and Harmleſs Levity, that it is ſcarce worth Speaking of; and ſo much the general Mode and Cuſtom too, that Men ſeldom ſeriouſly reprove it, either in themſelves, or others: But all this is *Strong Deluſion*; and makes it the more Neceſſary,

ceſſary, that Men ſhould be rallied out of the Frenzy: For, of a little Inſignificant Vice, in the Common Eſteem, it is Unconceivable how mighty, and Efficacious it has been in the way of Miſchief! A Lye, when Stript of Circumſtances, may ſeem of it ſelf a very Trifle, but when beheld in the Train of all its Evil Conſequences and Effects, it looks a Formidable thing, from which every Wiſe Man will run for Shelter. Like the little Cloud which the Servant of *Elijah* ſaw; the firſt Appearance of it was *no bigger than a Mans Hand:* But, on a ſuddain, it gathered to ſuch an overſpreading Darkneſs, that the Storm was felt Univerſally.

From what Obſervation I have made, I have that Conſiderable Opinion of a Lye, that I queſtion if ever a compleat and finiſh'd Villany was performed without it: Whatever is undertaken of that kind, muſt be either by a Lye, or by Force; now raſh and headlong force may *mean* it well, but it *makes* but *lame miſchief:* For, as * one well obſerv'd, *The hand can hardly lift it ſelf up high enough to ſtrike but it muſt be ſeen, ſo that it warns while it threatens*; and the greater ſwinge it fetches, the longer notice it gives to evade the Blow; but a Lye whiſpers defamation and ruine ſo ſoftly, that it ſeldom reaches the Ear, before it reaches the Heart: It brings on vengeance under the moſt engaging colours and pretences; and like a handy Executioner, always gives good

* Dr. *South.*

good words, while it claps over the nooſe: κάκαι φρένες, ἀδὺ λάλημα: It Poiſons with the tendereſt endearments, it diſpatches to the *long home* in the pleaſanteſt *vehicles*; it looks us ſmilingly in the face, while it gives an underhand thruſt at the Belly; it ſtrokes a Brother lovingly by the *beard*, and takes that convenient hold to ſmite him under the *Fifth Rib*; it cries *Hail Maſter*, and kiſſes, for the very ſignal of an helliſh treachery. To be brief, there hardly ever was an Oppreſſor, a Traytor, a Tyrant, or a Villain, but he was a Lyar; or elſe he ſet up without one very neceſſary faculty for his buſineſs. *Epanetas* is mentioned by *Plutarch*, for being wont to ſay, that Lying was more or leſs inſtrumental, in all the Evils and Outrages that were done in the World. Which ſhows that the Prophet put things Judiciouſly together, where he ſaid of Ephraim, *He dayly encreaſeth Lyes and Deſolation.* So then if we would not be thought to delight in Miſchief, we muſt not delight in Lying; and if we would reſt ſecure from harm, let that be part of our Litany, *Deliver me, O Lord, from Lying Lips, and from a deceitful Tongue.*

4. Lying is a pitiful, ſorry, ſcandalous habit, and if we have any ſence of Reputation, we ſhould diſdain it: 'Tis the ſign of a mean, and ſervile, and baſe diſpoſition; the ſhift of narrow, daſtardly, and degenerate Minds; the guard and weapon of a Coward, the refuge of a Slave: 'Tis the Property of Truth to be daring, to go directly to its end, and come up fairly to a Man's face; but a Lye is

fearful

fearful, and skulking, ſteals round you, cannot endure to be confronted; it not only ſhews a Coward, but contributes to make him: For when once a Man gets a knack of Lying himſelf out of difficulties, he will never dare ſtand a charge, and own his words, never take upon him what he has ſaid or done, but deny and Lye off all: It is not therefore for the good grace and repute of this faculty that Men of Honour ſo nicely reſent, and ſtomach to be told, in plain terms, that they Lye: I am loth to take a * Noble Author at his word, who ſays that, upon examination, he fears the reaſon of it is, *becauſe 'tis moſt natural to defend the part that lies moſt expoſed.* There may be ſomething in that, but I rather think the true ſecret is, That to give a Perſon the Lye, is to impeach his Manhood, 'tis in effect to call him Coward; and then, if his Sword be of true Metal it will fly out almoſt of its own accord. A Lye is ſuch an infamous and dirty thing, that it ſtains wherever it touches: † *A Lye is a foul blot in a Man*; there is ſomewhat ſo inſufferably rude and offenſive in the very ſound of the word, that 'tis doubtful whether it touches a Man's Honour moſt to *give* the Lye, or to *take* it: and yet I know not how it comes to paſs, but as Matters are managed, all the baſeneſs and turpitude ſeems to be confined to the word; we are commonly reconciled well enough to the thing; nevertheleſs this is prepoſterous and intolerable, when tryed by reaſon; that ought to

* Montaign. † Eccleſ. xx. 24.

to be very ſcandalous to *tell*, which it is very ſcandalous to be *told of*: Both the name and the thing are hateful. Lying is a wretched, ſneaking, odious Vice, and we had need be aſhamed of it; if the *Son of Syrach*'s ſence will paſs, it will ſhame us whether we will or no, for *The diſpoſition of a Lyar is diſhonourable, and his ſhame is ever with him.* But the bare ſhame is not yet the worſt circumſtance of the Sin; there is ſomething farther in it that ought to ſtartle us; For,

5. Lying will have by degrees a ſad effect upon our Religious Fear and Truſt; it will wean our Minds from a due regard of God, from the dread of his inviſible Preſence; from the awful ſence of his ſecret obſervation over us: For 'tis a ſort of wickedneſs that depends altogether upon being latent, and unobſerv'd; it keeps abſconding and lurking in the ſecret corners of our Hearts, and fears nothing ſo much as diſcovery, and the light. Now mark this for a Rule; any Sin we make free with, under this notion, that we can be private and ſecure in it, tends to render us regardleſs of the Powers unſeen; and inſenſibly to waſt away all divine fear and impreſſion out of our Souls. If we have any thing of Principle or Conſcience in us, it muſt appear by our being apprehenſive, above all things, of being ſeen and cenſured by God; and the trueſt judgment we can make, how far that reflection goes with us, is to conſider what diſturbance and interruption it gives to our ſecret deeds and imaginations; for if, while the Eyes of Men are ſhut, we find we can

make

make bold in the ſight of God; if it be all one between him and our Conſciences alone, what we think or do; our State is deplorable and deſperate: If his privity to our Minds be no controul upon our purpoſes, we muſt have but a looſe and lifeleſs apprehenſion of a future Judgment, and that I look upon is the laſt and finiſhing ſign of irreligion. Lying therefore muſt have a natural and ſure effect to unprinciple us, becauſe it uſeth us to be fearleſs and inſenſible of God, and diſciplines and hardens our hearts to this impious imagination, that ſo long as Men do not find us out, we are ſafe. Hence it was ſaid by one of the Ancients, *That Lying was a manifeſt contempt of God, and withal, a fear of Man:* Upon which that Honourable Writer I juſt mentioned, who is for the moſt part all fancy, made this reflection, which was full of Judgment; * *What can one imagine more hateful, and contemptible, than to be a Coward toward Man, and valiant againſt ones Maker?* And Gods Reſentment by the Prophet is agreeable to it; *For, of whom haſt thou been affraid, or feared, that thou haſt Lyed, and haſt not remembred me?* So then, he who would not be thought to defie God, muſt not diſſemble with Man; he who would not be ſuſpected for Atheiſtical, muſt keep from ſuſpicion of being a Lyar. This therefore, to all who are not quite out of love with good Principles, ſhould be a preſſing Argument againſt this Sin.

6. We

* Montaign.

6. We ſhould no leſs abandon and deteſt Lying, for the ill influence it will have upon our Morals: Lying undertakes for two things, which are of ſingular conſequence to advance and encourage Wickedneſs; it pretends to bring us on ſucceſsfully, and to bring us off ſecurely: It will provide a hundred ſhifts, and diſguiſes, to protect a Sinner, both coming and going: It is ſo apt an invention to bring us on and to ſtand by us in our evil ways, that it is commonly the firſt thing our degenerate Natures take a liking to; we begin with it in our Childhood; and when the Devil finds a Lad to be ready and nimble in the uſe of this gift, he conceives great hopes of him: We firſt enter upon it in our Play, and when Luck runs againſt us, the Lye muſt run for us: When we have found the uſe of it, we Romance and Lye in our Chat; when it is a little familiar in our Converſe, we begin to turn it to account; we Lye for ſomething, if it be but for a trifle; every thing muſt have a beginning; and from ſtretching for a ſmall matter, we ſoon take to lanch out luſtily in the way of Buſineſs; we will deprecate, perjure, and brazen out any thing to compaſs our Ends: Lying is the firſt eaſie in-let to all manner of Injuſtice, Theft, Oppreſſion, and Villainy: It ſits brooding and gendring miſchief, juſt as it is ſaid in the Prophet's Allegory, *Out of the Serpents root ſhall come forth a Cockatrice, and his fruit ſhall be a fiery flying Serpent.*

And

And as it brings Men on with ſucceſs and improvement in wickedneſs, ſo it is very officious and ready to bring Men off in ſecurity: What a natural, apt, and preſent thing is a Lye, to one ſurpriz'd in a fault? How thoughtfully do Men Treat and Article with it beforehand, to ſave them harmleſs? And how many bold Eſſays will it venture at to vouch for, and clear our innocency? Such a fair and feſible account! ſuch a plauſible rehearſal of the matter! with ſuch an inoffenſive look, and ſo many ſolemn proteſtations, that one would imagine no room could be left for ſuſpicion! Lying is a faculty that will ſtand by it ſelf, as long as one Lye can ſtand by another; Tho' it be faithful to nothing elſe, it will be conſtant and true to its own Defence; And as, in a foul Sea, the leading Wave no ſooner breaks away in Froth, but there comes up another to make head againſt the Rock; So, when the Spirit of Lying is once rebuk'd and ruffled, it ſhall come Driving againſt a Stern Charge, in an Unrelenting Fluctuation, one Audaciouſly rowling on to make good the baulk of the other: It has a ſtrange dexterity and Aſſurance not only to bring its own ſelf off, but to deny and to Palliate all other Iniquities: As God is ſaid to aſſiſt his Saints in time of Peril, and to provide them with Inſtant Anſwers without Premeditation, ſo the Pſalmiſt repreſents the Devil to be, on every occaſion, the Sinner's ready Prompter, *Let Satan ſtand at his Right Hand*; no doubt, to ſuggeſt and Whiſper all pertinent Inventions and Lyes to bring him off. There is no end of the uſefulneſs of Lying,

ing, to a courſe of Wickedneſs; ſo that if we have any ſort of regard for our Vertue, and our Morals, we muſt reſolve to break with this pernicious habit, and deal ſincerely.

7. We ſhould have a care of Lying, as it tends to ruine us in our own Perſonal Credit and Reputation: What touches us here, we are apt enough to be ſenſible of: He who has loſt himſelf in this reſpect, has in a manner loſt himſelf from Civil Society: When ever any particular Part or Member is found inſincere and rotten, it muſt fall off; becauſe there is no foundation remaining for any farther dependence. Now whatever a Lyar may fanſie to the contrary, the World will find him out by degrees, and ſettle and ſpread his Character: And when once he has got the Name, his Condition will be ſomething ſingular; he will be a Man by himſelf; no one will venture to contract either Friendſhip, or Commerce, or even common acquaintance with him: His word will go for nothing; His breath may be uſeful to him in Life, but not in Speech; which is agreeable to *Job's* Expoſtulation, *who will make me a Lyar, and make my Speech nothing worth?* In a word, It is with this, as with ſome other Immoralities, that Men, by Extravagant and Exceſſive Uſe, may out Sin their own Faculties and Abilities; Lyars may become mear *Impotents* in their own Wickedneſs: They may have the *will* remaining, but not the *Power* to Lye: They may utter fruitleſs Untruths, but they can hardly be capable of a compleat and perfect

Lye;

Lye; for they can no longer pretend *to Speak Untruths, with design or Expectation of Deceiving*, who are Conscious, that none of their Acquaintance who know them, will believe one word they say.

And then, the worst is, that the name and Character of a Notorious Lyar is rarely, no not without a Miracle, to be shook off again: once a Lyar, and ever so. It is in this, as in some other Cases, a Man may be depriv'd of the benefit of his Faculty, but the *Character* of it is *indelible*: The advantage of Lying can be but short, in *that* a Man will soon be *suspended*, but the scandal of it is for Life: And there are two sufficient Reasons for it; for first, it is one of the difficultest habits in the World to be left off: There is an unaccountable satisfaction and charm in running on, for which a Man can give no better reason to himself, than that he is inchanted and bewitched to it: He shall be sensible that he is become discredited, and Proverbed for a Lyar, that all his words are received as idle Tales, that he is ever taken with distrust and allowance, that the Company many times look hard at him, that they strive to keep their Countenances, that they bless themselves as he goes, and that in general 'tis almost got into a Rule, that a Story must needs be false, because he is the Author: And yet all this shall signifie very little, either to change or silence, or abate the vain habit: Or, if you could suppose a Miracle, that a confirmed and common Lyar should leave off, and become con-

conſcientious in what he ſays; yet you muſt ſuppoſe another Miracle, to make Men alter their Opinions of him, and give him Credit: God muſt work *ſtrong deluſions* upon a Man, to make him believe a Lyar. And what a miſerable Condition is it to be run ſo far out of Repute, that we can have no Truſt given us for one word we ſay? Sometimes it may vaſtly concern our intereſt to have our Words paſs; now and then a Lyar tells a true ſtory, and then, it being ſomewhat unuſual with him, he looks that particular notice ſhould be taken of it; but all is received with the ſame allowance and regard; Fiction and Reality are without Diſtinction in his Speech; as all colours look alike in the dark, ſo all kind of Expreſſions are alike in a Lyar; Truth it ſelf is ſuſpected for coming out of his Mouth, and juſtly enough, for what buſineſs had Truth to do there? *From that thing which is Falſe, what Truth can come?* Remember how it fared with the Shepherd's Boy; he had cheated the Family ſo often, with the mock and lying howl of a Wolf, that when the true Wolf came howling and ruſhing upon him, he cryed out in vain for help; he had befooled them ſo many times with the falſe noiſe, that they would not regard him now, when it fell out to be too true. The Lyar loſes the main end and ſatisfaction even of *Romancing*; for 'tis nonſence to Lye, if we can't make People believe it: And at this rate, he deprives himſelf in effect of the benefit

benefit and uſe of Speech; for one had as good be altogether Dumb, as be capable of Speaking to no Purpoſe. A Man would not ſuppoſe himſelf in ſuch a Caſe as this for the univerſe; and yet if a Lyar would but get as well acquainted with himſelf, as other People are, he cannot be Perſwaded how it ſhould be otherwiſe. On the other Hand, there is a ſubſtantial ineſtimable Treaſure in the very name and ſound of Sincerity, which is not to be purchaſed by the *Indies:* It ſets a Man high in regard and privilege, above the reſt of his fellow Creatures, and carries an Authority with it, that is next to Inſpiration: And is it not a ſingularity in Eſteem worth trying for, when like *Zenocrates* among the Greeks, we may eſtabliſh ſuch a Character for our Truth and Integrity, that our bare words ſhall paſs, before the ſolemn Oaths and Aſſeverations of other Men?

8. Another thing very conſiderable in Lying, to diſcourage us from the cuſtom of it, is the bad effect it muſt have in time upon our very *Intellectuals:* By conſtant Uſe and Exerciſe our Underſtandings, muſt be perplexed and incommoded by it; 'twill mingle in ſuch an odd *Medly* of *Ideas*, the falſe among the true, in the repoſitory of our Minds, that our Memories ſhall be at a perfect loſs how to ſort them; and when the Memory can't be certain which are real, and which not, the reaſon can't make any ſure work with them, nor the Judg-

ment

ment determine with certainty. The Imagination of a Lyar, is like an *inchanted Field*, wherein there ſeems to appear ſuch a variety of ſtrange *fantaſtical* Ideas, ſuch a confus'd diſorderly mixture of Chymeras with realities, ſuch a Chaos and huddle of notions together, right and wrong, that the Viſion ſhould be enough to turn his Brains; and the miſchief is, unleſs a Man could undertake to ſay back again, all thoſe *romantick* things he has ſaid to raiſe the *deluſion*, there is no diſpelling the *Charm*, nor chaſing away the Monſters, to let the true Light ariſe, and clear up the Mind again. This Image can't look extravagant, if you conſider how often a Lyar avers what he never heard, and quotes what he never read, and gives account of Authors which he never ſaw, and repeats over his own Inventions ſo frequently, 'till he cheats himſelf at laſt into a Belief, that *ſurely theſe things were real*; then how can it be otherwiſe, but that, of the notions which remain upon his Mind, he ſhould in proceſs of time be utterly uncapable to recollect which of them had, and which had not, any true Foundation in Nature? Nay, I'll undertake that a confirmed Lyar, can't ſecure himſelf from being impoſed upon by his own dreams; let the impreſſions of them be laid aſide in his mind but a few days, and if he chance to turn them over again, he ſhall not be certain What to make of them, what Truth may be in them, nor how they came there.

* If

* If *Ceſellius Baſſus* had not been often wont to impoſe upon himſelf the belief of his own falſe imaginations, he could never have doted ſo far upon an extravagant illuſion of the Night, as not only to miſtake it for a real Truth himſelf, but impudently to paſs the deception upon the Roman Emperor: The Man had a notion imprinted upon his fancy, of a prodigious Maſs of Gold hidden under ground, in a certain Eſtate he had in *Africa*; and having forgot how he came by the notion, he concluded at laſt it was a real thing; and accordingly goes and puts it into *Nero*'s head, with that ſingular confidence, and with ſo many probable Circumſtances for tale and-token, that the Tyrant credulouſly received the notice; and, without farther diſtruſt, diſpatches away the Informer with publick Coſt and Solemnity, to go over and fetch it all into the Roman Treaſury: The Concluſion was, all that *Baſſus* found by digging was his own grave, which he choſe to make *there*, rather than return back to acquaint the Emperor with his diſappointment.

Between Dreams, and Lyes, and Realities, a Man given to Romancing muſt often find himſelf perplex'd and nonplus'd: It is for difficulties of this kind, that it is become a Proverb, *That a Lyar had need have a good Memory.* Nor did this notion eſcape the *Son of Syrach*, when, Speaking of the Law

* Tacit. An. l. 16.

Law of Reaſon, he ſays, * *Men that are Lyars cannot remember her.* And thus again, what the Prophet threatned as an extraordinary Judgment, is indeed the natural conſequence of this Sin, † *A Sword* (that is, *a Fate*) *is upon the Lyars, and they ſhall dote.* A Cuſtom of Lying muſt, in long run, create a great miſunderſtanding between a Man's intellectual Faculties, and ſet the Fancy, Memory, and Judgment at variance among themſelves, each accuſing the other of being Falſe and Treacherous; by which means the operations and reſults of the Mind muſt often prove indeliberate, and precarious: And therefore tho' all Men are alike obliged to deteſt Lying, yet there are none who have greater reaſon to have it in abhorrence, than thoſe who give their Minds to Learning and Philoſophy: For that being nothing elſe but a ſincere and ardent inclination to diſcover and admire *Truth*, it muſt imply at the ſame time, a proportionable hatred and averſion toward all Falſehood, and Lying. Accordingly, when * *Plato* proteſted that he would reſpect none for Philoſophers, but ſuch as were earneſtly and paſſionately bent after *Truth*, [τὰς τῆς ἀληθείας φιλοθεάμονας] he ſignified in the ſame words, how much it concerned wiſe and inquiſitive Men, to abominate all Lying and Deluſion. So that if we duly regard the improvement of our Souls, and affect thoſe high Privileges of Truth and

* Eccluſ. 15. 8. † Jer. 50. 36. * De Rep. l. 5.

Knowledge, which are the perfections of Human Nature, we will not endure to ſcribble and blur over the Table of onr Minds with ſuch falſe inſignificant Scrawls and Cyphers.

9. And Laſtly, We ſhould utterly abandon and abhor Lying, for that juſt contempt and odium it brings upon us, in the ſight of God and Man: 'Twas *Plato*'s reflection, [ψεῦδος πάντες θεοίτε καὶ ἄνθρωποι μισοῦσιν,] and we find it diſtinctly confirm'd in Scripture: 'Tis hateful in the ſight of God; *Lying Lips are an abomination in the ſight of God*, and *all falſe ways he utterly abhors*: It is no leſs deteſted by all good Men; it is one of *Solomon*'s Aphoriſms, That *a Righteous Man hateth Lying*: And it was the reſolution of his Royal Father, *He that telleth Lyes ſhall not tarry in my ſight*: To all this let it be added for a cloſe, that the ſure end and reward of it is Damnation; for we have had it reveal'd from Heaven, That *the Lyar hath his part in the Lake which Burneth with Brimſtone, which is the Second Death*. So then the ſum is, if we have any juſt regard for *the Satisfaction and Succeſs of our own Endeavours*, for *Human Report and Teſtimony*, (whereon the Credit of *Sacred*, *Profane*, and *Ordinary Relations* ſo much depends,) for *our own Manhood and Honour*, for *our Religion*, our *Reputation*, our *Morals*, our *Intellectuals*, our *Favour with God and with all Good Men here*, and for *our Everlaſting Condition yet to come*, let us make a firm Covenant with our Hearts, that we will upon no Pretence or Temptation whatſoever, Indulge our ſelves to *Lye*.

CON-

CONCLUSION.

Wherein ſome Means are adviſed to avoid LYING.

V. TO make way for a clean, effectual Riddance of this Sin out of Human Society, a few Things may be adviſeable at Parting, in Conſequence of the foregoing Particulars.

Let us take care that our Children be moſt ſtrictly and religiouſly diſciplin'd up to Truth: Let us teach them to Admire, Affect, and Love it; and whatever we ſpare them for, let us never ſpare them for an obſtinate Lye; when they would ſave themſelves from another Fault by *that*, let them ſmart more ſeverely for the Lye, than the Fault they would indemnify by it.

But before we can, with Countenance and Authority, ſucceed in Correcting our Children, we muſt take the ſtricteſt Care and Caution, that we ſet them a good Example in our own Lives. By the Pſalmiſt one would think, that Lying, like a natural Infirmity, might become Hereditary: For he talks of ſome who *are eſtranged from the very Womb, and are no ſooner Born but they ſpeak Lyes:* And it is indeed obſerv'd, often enough, that they will ſpeak Lyes, before they can ſpeak Plain: So that, if it does not run in the Blood, it is ſoon catch'd by Imitation: For which Reaſon we ſhould, for our Children's ſake,

endeavour to be ſevere Maſters of Truth and Sincerity our ſelves; aad reſolve never to give way to a wilful deliberate Lye, be the Temptation what it will. And, in order to this, we ſhould affect to raiſe our Minds, as much as we poſſibly can above Corruption, Inducement, and all external Influence. *Plato* repreſents the Divine Veracity, to be thus ſecur'd, Οὐκ ἄρ' ἐστὶν ὃ ἕνεκα ἂν Θεὸς ψεύδοιτο, *There is not that thing in Nature for the ſake of which God can be tempted to Lye.* And tho' we are not *unſuſceptible* Beings, yet let us yield, as little as may be, to *Impreſſion* or Cuſtom: Let us *Not uſe to make any manner of Lye, for the Cuſtom thereof is not Good.* Let us never tell an Innocent, Inoffenſive, Inſignificant Lye: And for this methinks the Philoſopher's Reaſoning is exceeding Right and Pertinent; * Ὁ γὰρ φιλαλήθης ἂν ἐν οἷς μὴ διαφέρει, &c. "For "when a Man is ſuch a ſtrict admirer of "Truth, that he will uſe himſelf to keep "ſuperſtitiouſly to it, even tho' in Caſes "of no Moment, how much more will he "think himſelf concern'd to ſpeak Truth, "when it is in Matters of Conſequence? "he who would refrain from Lying, ſim-"ply as Lying, will be ſure to refrain from "it, when Circumſtances ſhall render it "diſhonourable and unjuſt; and this is the "Man who deſerves a Character for his "Sincerity.

Farther, in order to keep Chaſt and Unſpotted from this Sin, we ſhould be very ſcrupu-

* Ariſt. Eth. l. 4. c. 13.

ſcrupulous how we take the Freedom to Magnifie and Enlarge: For he who exceeds the Truth, and he who comes ſhort of it, are both alike guilty of Lying, and it muſt betray a ſtrange Propenſion to the Sin, when we cannot forbear it even in a true Relation: If Men give their Minds to it, how abundantly may they launch it out, and Lye, only in the way of Circumſtance? And what an odd *Metaphyſical* thing is a *Reality*, when dreſs'd out, from Head to Heel, with Fictions and Chimeras? 'tis no new thing to have an inconſiderable Tale lick up, and gather monſtrouſly in Rolling; all one as a little Book, by the help of Criticiſms, Paraphraſes, Annotations, Comments, and Conjectures, ſhall improve and ſwell up to a Volume inſupportable. And I am the rather concern'd to drop ſome expreſs Caution againſt this itch of Amplifying, becauſe I have obſerv'd Perſons of ſome Probity to be a little tardy this Way. Now to be liberal in laying out our own Inventions upon true Stories, is upon all Accounts to be forborn, by thoſe who make any Pretenſions to ſtrict and ſteady Sincerity. For firſt, 'tis a diſingenuous Impoſition upon the Perſon we converſe with, by ſurpriſing his Aſſent at a Diſadvantage; for, when he has Reaſon to be confident we are upon a true Relation, his Belief is pre-poſſeſs'd to receive all ſuch veriſimulous Inventions as we think fit to add, for the better grace of the Story; by which means he is not only deceiv'd himſelf, but in a way of becoming the ridiculous Inſtrument of retailing out our Lyes to other Peo-

ple: It is the ſame kind of Cheat as that of paſſing off corrupt and baſe Goods, by the Credit of ſome ſound and ſubſtantial Samples; or rather, like that which St. *Paul*, upon a due ſuſpicion of Human Nature, was apprehenſive of; that when he had laid a true and ſolid Foundation, others ſhould come after him and build upon it, every Man according to his own Imagination, *Gold*, *Silver*, *Precious Stones*, *Wood*, *Hay*, *Stubble*: *But* ſays he, *let them take care what they do*, *for the Fire ſhall try every Man's Work of what ſort it is.* And *further*, we ought to be cautious of all Circumſtantial Enlargements, becauſe, let there be never ſo real a Foundation for what we ſpeak, yet as far as we amplifie upon it we Lye; there may not be ſo much, and ſuch groſs Lying indeed, as if we had invented the whole; and while ſome of it is true, as well as ſome Falſe, there ſeems a little Modeſty Remaining; but unleſs we tenderly Cheriſh it, a *little* of that Vertue can never laſt long: A Cuſtom of enlarging upon ſome Foundation, will ſoon bring you to enlarge upon no Foundation at all; if you are good at Amplifying, you can never fail of becoming good at Inventing; for juſt ſo young Lads come on in their Exerciſes; at firſt they muſt have ſome pertinent Hints, and Topicks given them, upon which they are to Expatiate; and ſo, in time and practiſing, they will become perfect in the work of Invention.

To keep from enlarging, (for there the Temptation begins) we ſhould be adviſ'd to abridge our ſelves of that fond and fooliſh Delight

Delight we are all ſo very apt to take, in ſtartling and amuſing other People with Wonders: our Inventing ſo many ſurprizing, improbable Circumſtances for this Purpoſe, does but quite ſpoil our Intention; for inſtead of making the thing look ſome-what more than Ordinary, we make nothing of it: We have always the faireſt Chance to be credited, when what we relate ſounds likely and natural; and if we could be content with what Nature produces, we ſhould be ſupply'd with Materials enough for all our Interviews: We need not invent odd Scandals to belye one another into diſrepute, for, if we can but have Patience, the Generality are Ridiculous and Scandalous enough to afford real Novels ſufficient for that Purpoſe; there is no ſuch neceſſity for Straining to make one another look Infamous and Abſurd; if we only did one another Juſtice, and drew but to the *Life*, there would be defamation enough in *that*: We ſhould ſufficiently Stomach to ſee our ſelves expos'd in our own true and proper Colours: He who lays it on thicker and courſer than Nature, muſt be monſtrouſly Unmerciful, and at the loſs of his own Credit; he muſt even undo his own Malice by over-acting it; incredible Calumny brings its own Vindication: And the virulent Tongue that ſhoots out too vehemently, will inſtead of Piercing, be apt to double upon the Mark, and lick it ſmooth again.

Farther, we ſhould not only take heed of enlarging and inventing our ſelves, but we ought to be a little Cautious how we take things after other Perſons: Some Men are ſo notorious

notorious at the Lying Gift, that 'tis Weakneſs and Scandal to receive what they offer, but much more to paſs it off again upon their Authority. *Nigidius* was thought Witty enough to be taken Notice of, for nicely ſplitting the Hair between *mentiri*, and *mendacium dicere*: *To Lye*, ſaid he, *is to invent a Falſehood of our own, and knowingly to paſs it off*; but *to tell a Lye, is ignorantly to paſs another's Falſehood off for Truth*: And upon this * *Gellius* tells us he made this Moral Reflection; *Vir bonus præſtare debet ne mentiatur, prudens ne mendacium dicat*: "It is the part "of a good Man never to Lye, and of a "Prudent Man never to tell a Lye. Things gather in the Relation ſo extravagantly, that we ſhould make ſome Abatements even after Men of Credit; their manner of telling will magnifie of Courſe: Let a Painter Copy after another Piece, and be as exact as if it were for his Life, and yet 'tis much but he varies, or adds ſomething out of his own Fancy: And ſo 'tis in copying Characters after other Men, but commonly the Alterations *here* are out of all Meaſure: It was a ſmart Reply of old *Thales*, who being ask'd what Diſtance there was between *Truth* and *Falſehood? as much*, ſaid he *as between the Eye, and the Ear*: What a Man ſees he may be certain of, but if it come by hear-ſay, 'tis an even Chance if there be any Reality in it.

One

* L. 11. C. 11.

One Admonition farther, and I have done: Let us give our ſelves up to Study and Admire *Truth* in General; not only Moral, but Logical or Natural Truth; not only as it regards the Agreement of our Words with our Thoughts, but of our Thoughts with the nature of Things; As *Syracides* adviſed, * *In no wiſe ſpeak againſt the Truth, but be aba∫h'd of the Errour of thine Ignorance:* For tho' to ſpeak as we think be no Lye, yet it may eaſily be Falſe, if we are not careful to take things Rightly: And to ſpeak what is Falſe is an Imperfection, even when it does not amount to a Sin: And to differ often with Nature, is the way to differ with our own Minds. God is our great Original, and we pretend to be his Image; but if we mean to keep up any true Reſemblance of him in our Souls, our Words muſt be as our Thoughts, and our Thoughts as the Reality of Things: The Divine Perfection is, that he cannot poſſibly impoſe, or be impos'd upon; to keep him therefore in our View, we muſt take all poſſible Care about the rectitude of our Judgments, as well as the Sincerity of our Wills. To conclude, as *Lucian* does in his *Dialogue* againſt *Romancing*, "We have "a moſt effectual Antidote againſt Deluſi- "ons, if we take the Courage and Reſolu- "tion to ſtick to it; Let us ſtudy Truth, "and follow Reaſon and Reality in all Things, "and we need not fear being troubled with "this fooliſh and evil Spirit of Lying.

F I N I S.

---

* Eccluſ. 4. 25.

28 MR 59

4224 L.51